

Litchfield Wetland Management District
Litchfield, Minnesota

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
Calendar Year 1987

U. S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

REVIEW AND APPROVALS

LITCHFIELD WETLAND MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Litchfield, Minnesota

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

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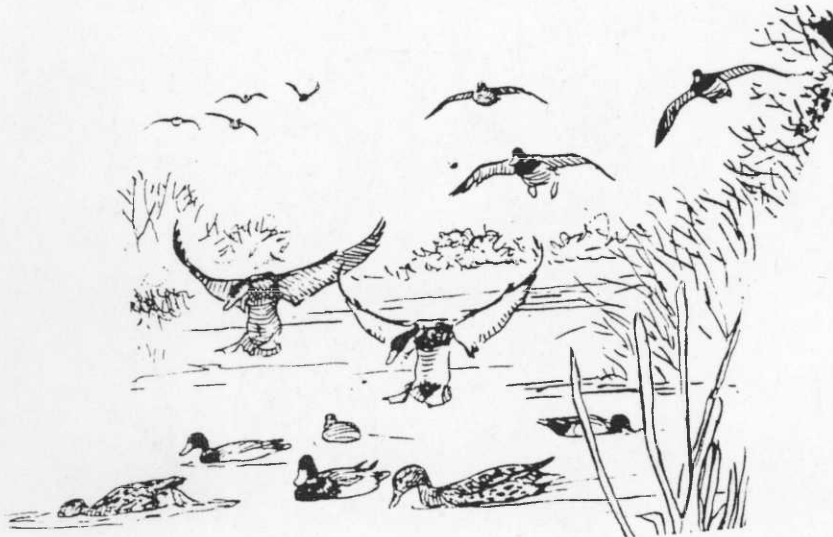
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Regional Office Approval Date

INTRODUCTION

When we first settled this great country, our limited technology forced us to work with the land. Wildlife co-existed with us - not by our design but because of our limitations. But we did enjoy these "partners" of the land.



It was not long before our technology became sophisticated and in the early 1960s our ability to influence the land and its wildlife knew few bounds. Into this arena entered the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service with the Small Wetlands Program.

As a part of the Small Wetlands Program, the Litchfield Wetland Management District (WMD) became an operating Station within Division of Wetland Management on October 1, 1978. Located in central Minnesota, the District includes Meeker, Kandiyohi, Stearns, McLeod, LeSueur, Wright, and the lower one-third of Todd and Morrison Counties. The District is responsible for 107 Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) totaling 22,687 acres and 21,601 acres of easements protecting 6,500 wetland acres. In addition, the Litchfield WMD has been assigned management responsibility for the Windom WMD. This WMD includes Cottonwood, Jackson, Faribault, and Freeborn Counties. In this WMD there are 26 WPAs totaling 4574 acres and 80 acres of easements protecting 15 wetland acres.

Rolling woodlands to the north and east gradually change to flat, fertile prairie farmland to the south and west. Precipitation, climate, water quality, soils, and land use vary greatly. The end result is habitat of great diversity, although woefully reduced, altered, and degraded by the activities of man. Today the most significant threat to waterfowl habitat within this District are the land uses associated with modern agriculture.

The District has very cold winters and is usually snow covered from December until April. Springs are normally cool and wet; summers can be extremely hot. Precipitation during the summer is from periodic, sometimes violent, local storms. Autumn is generally quite cool and can produce significant precipitation. Normal snowfall within the District ranges from 40-45" and normal total precipitation ranges from 26-30".

Land acquisition has been directly related to funding. In recent years major emphasis has been to secure fee tracts in priority working areas of western Stearns, western Meeker, and McLeod Counties and the northern half of Kandiyohi County. However, in 1986 and 1987 there was a special emphasis made to roundout WPAs in the Windom WMD.

As time passes there is less and less habitat to buy. Proposed acquisition has to be adjusted annually because man's activities have eliminated target tracts. Acquisition dollars remain static. Public Waters Inventory, fee purchases, State and Federal Water Bank programs, wetland easements, and the new farm program are our present weapons in the war to save waterfowl habitats.

In 1987 through activities initiated by the 1985 Farm Bill, the Station began to work with waterfowl habitat management on private lands. With a modest start in 1987, this work on private lands has opened doors to possibilities for habitat improvement that are almost without limit.

Seven waterfowl species have received the designation species of special emphasis in Region 3. These are mallard, pintail, black duck, wood duck, canvasback, redhead, and ring-necked duck. With the exception of the black duck these species are recorded nesters on WPAs.

In a community where agriculture is intensive, the demand for weed control is immense. A great amount of staff effort and dollars is spent in controlling those plant species identified as noxious weeds by state, county, and township governments. Much noxious weed control has been accomplished through the establishment of quality warm season nesting cover. Canada thistle is the primary problem species and requires chemical treatment or mowing. This has been costly but is absolutely necessary to maintain the good relationship with the agricultural community needed for an active and effective acquisition program.

Public information has been a major emphasis here at the Litchfield District. Activities done on a routine basis include: movie loans, informational newsletter, radio and newspaper releases, System 70, county fair and "Prairie Pothole Days" exhibits, meetings with township and county

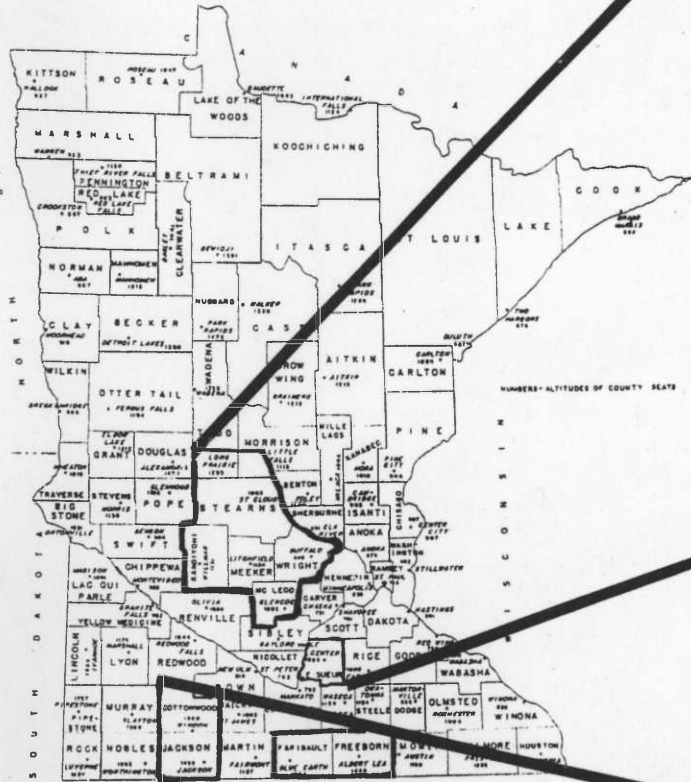
officials, hunter leaflet dispensers, and contacts with state and federal legislators. These activities have created positive dialogue between wetland personnel and the community. This has resulted in more open and friendly communication and a better atmosphere for problem solution. The WMD is a part of the community.

The year 1987 was a most satisfying one with much accomplished for the environment and for wildlife. Again, as it has been in the past, a staff of dedicated employees made our accomplishments possible. Read on for all the details.

LITCHFIELD WMD



MINNESOTA



WINDOM WMD

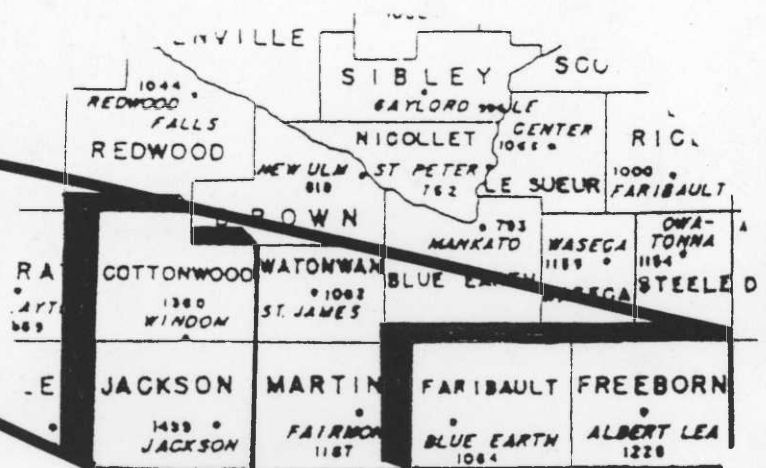


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B. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

The winter of 1986-87 saw a reprieve from the record levels of precipitation received during 1986, thus ending a 5-year period of extreme wetness. But, if 1986 was the year of the rains, then 1987 was the year of the drought.

As winter advanced into the snow season, the typical Minnesota snows failed to materialize while temperatures averaged at least 10 degrees Fahrenheit above normal. These conditions resulted in the mildest winter since 1895 and one of the warmest and driest on record.

Without the snow cover as insulation from the cold and dry air, many wildlife species suffered from the exposure. But, since the temperatures remained above normal, without prolonged periods of -20 degree temperatures, many more were able to make it through in relatively good health.

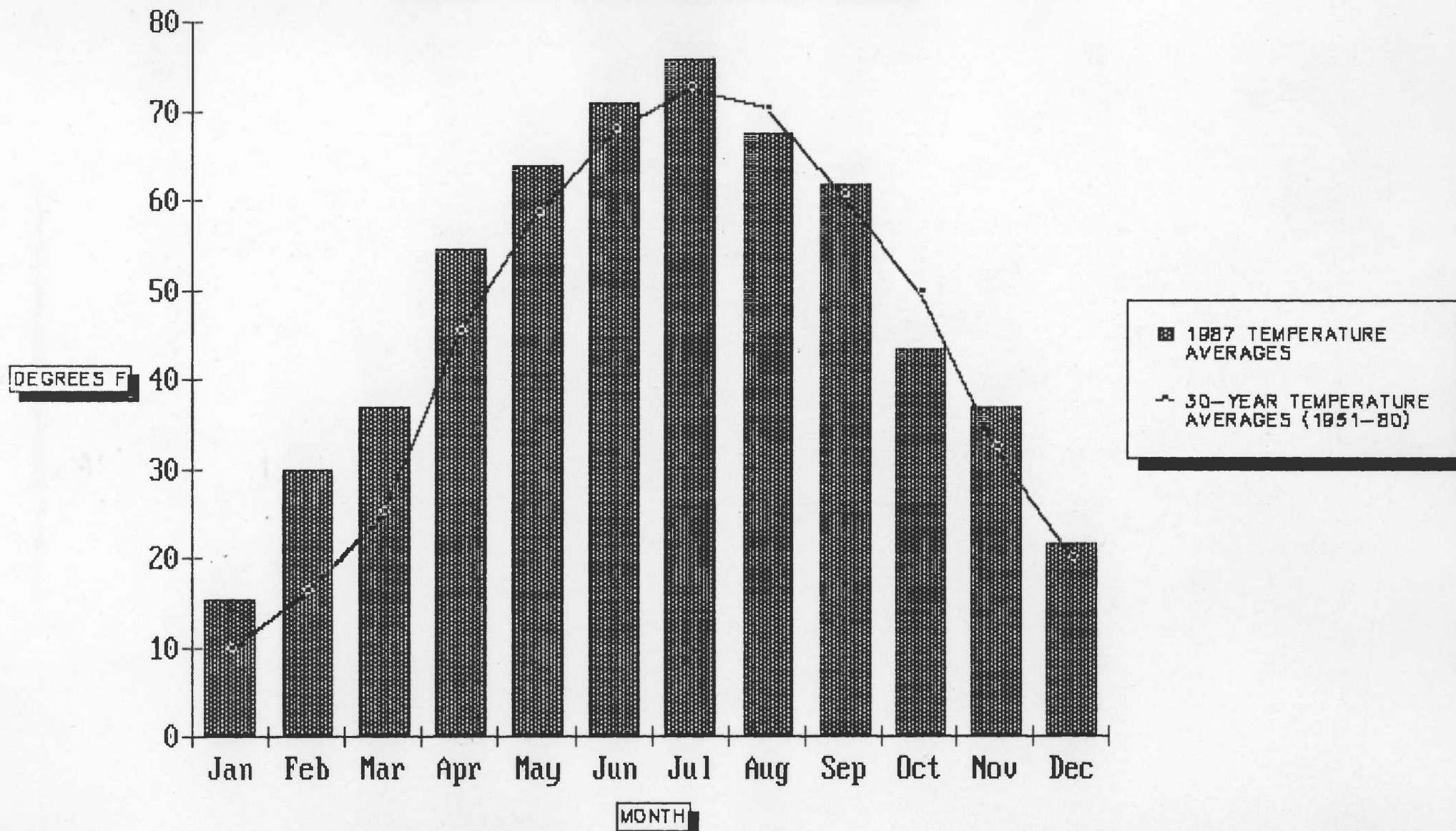
Spring arrived two weeks to a month early in the District, melting the ice from Lake Ripley on March 8, one month earlier than last year. The warm dry air and lack of precipitation during this time caused the dead vegetation to become tinder dry resulting in numerous grass fires throughout the District.

Countywide burning bans were put into effect in early April, inhibiting our prescribed burning schedule.

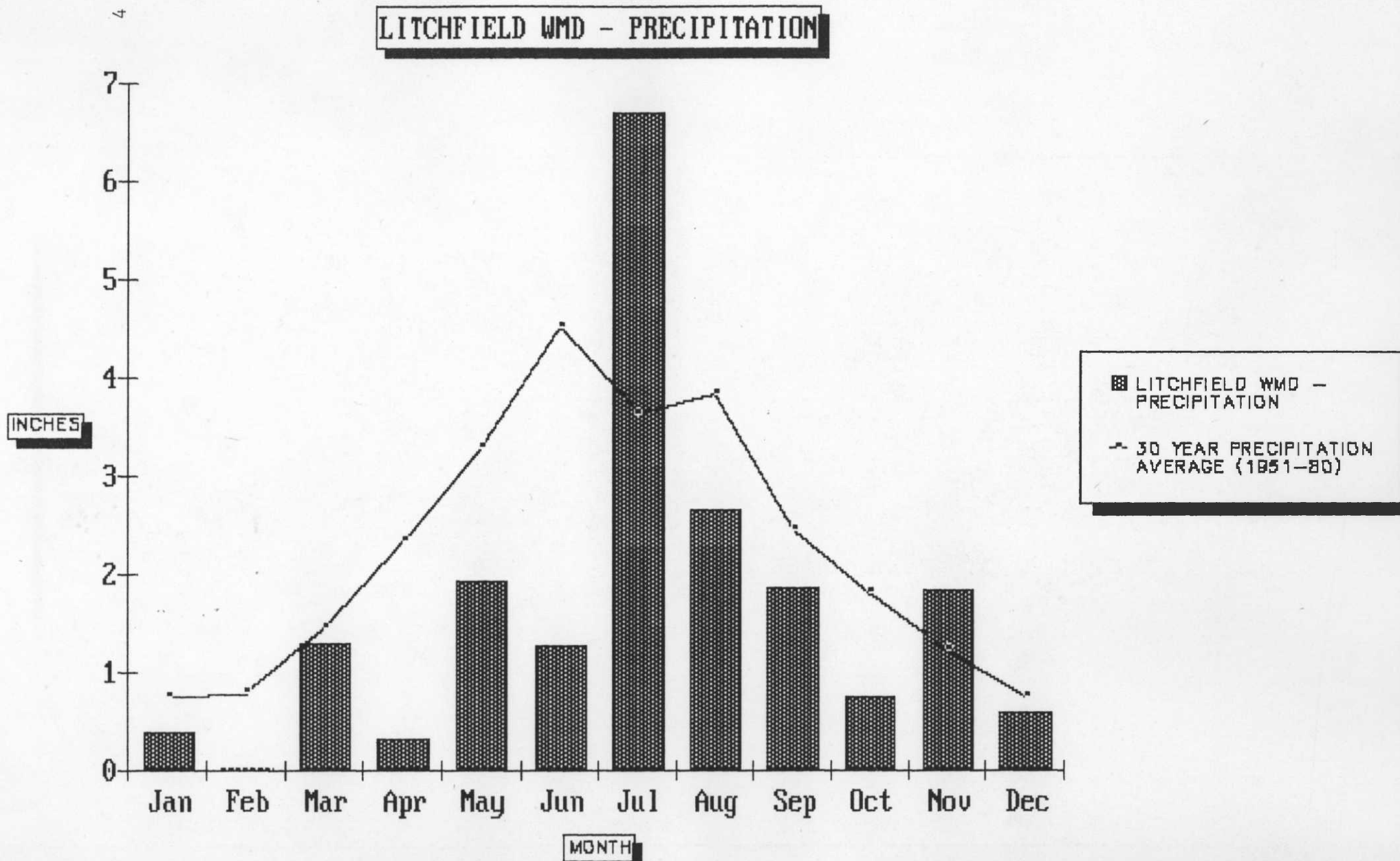
As spring progressed into summer, precipitation remained well below normal resulting in drought conditions throughout the State. At the same time the temperatures stayed above normal setting new records on several occasions. These conditions caused wetland levels to recede at an alarming rate throughout the District and by fall, most Type III and many Type IV wetlands were dry.

With the growing season approximately two weeks ahead of schedule and fields in excellent working condition, farmers got a head start on the fall harvest. Before the first frost and heavy freeze, which occurred on October 3, most crops were harvested and fall plowing complete. The first snow, .5 inches, occurred on October 27. By the end of November 5.5 inches of snow had fallen giving hope that weather conditions may be returning to normal.

The following charts show monthly averages and 30-year averages for temperature and precipitation at Litchfield, MN.

LITCHFIELD WMD-TEMPERATURE AVERAGES

LITCHFIELD WMD - PRECIPITATION



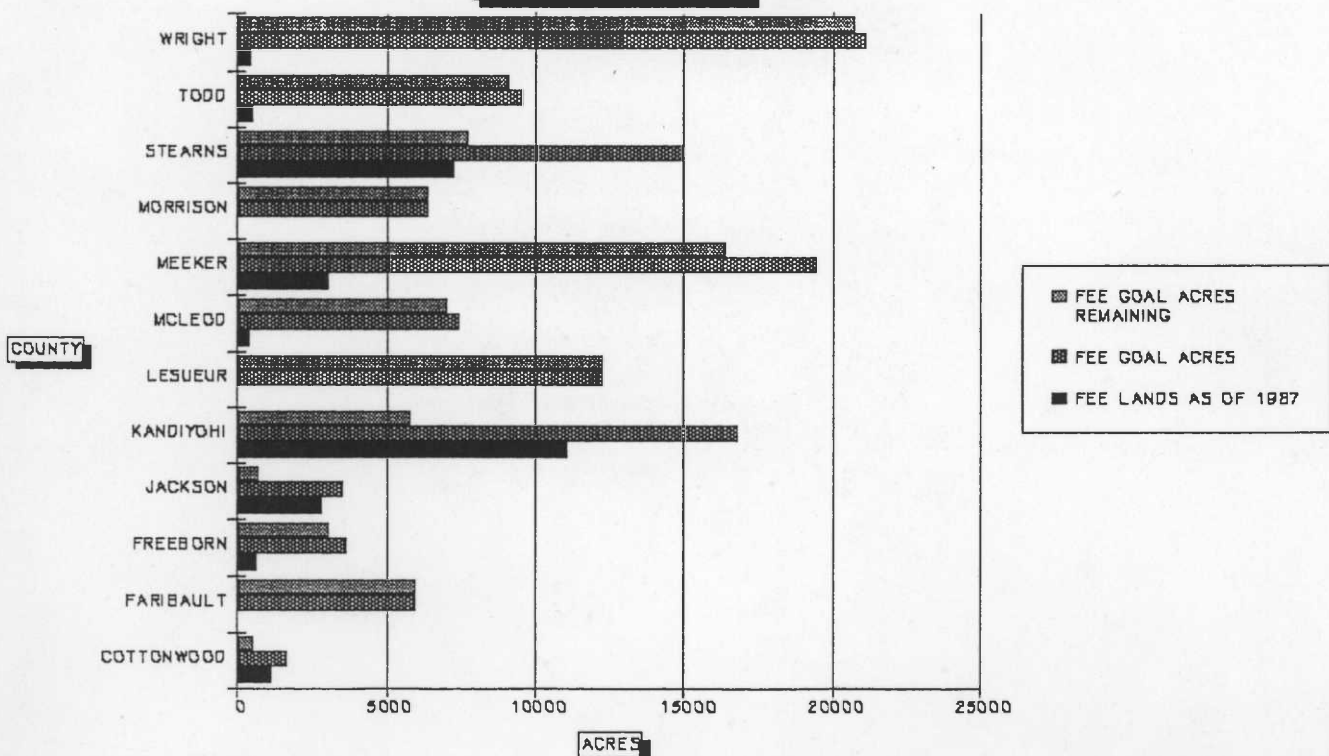
C. LAND ACQUISITION1. Fee Title

A total of 483.68 acres were added to the Litchfield WMD with the acceptance of seven new tracts as of December 31. This acquisition represents the start of one new WPA (Cosmos WPA Mk-11) and roundout for five existing WPAs. A total of 388.85 acres were added to the Windom WMD with the acceptance of three new tracts. Two tracts started new WPAs (Lake Carey Ct-8 and Ulbricht Jk-15). The following table shows fee lands accepted during 1987:

Page No.	1	REPORT FOR PURCHASE YEAR	1987
01/05/88			
TRACT NAME	TRACT NO.	TOTAL ACRES	WET ACRES ROUNDOUT TO
=====	=====	=====	=====
** COUNTY: CT			
PIETZ ELLSWORTH L	25	75.00	19.00 LAKE CAREY
WHITEFORD GLENN L	26	72.55	5.00 DES MOINES RIVER
** Subtotal **		147.55	24.00
** COUNTY: JK			
ULBRICHT LOREN	36	80.00	21.00 ULBRICHT
** Subtotal **		80.00	21.00
** COUNTY: KD			
SWEEP THEODORE W	272,A,B	39.31	30.12 SWEEP
** Subtotal **		39.31	30.12
** COUNTY: MK			
JOHNSON DONALD J	12A	-73.18	0.00 CASEY LAKE
SWANSON RAYMOND PAUL	121	160.00	36.00 COSMOS
FISCHER ESTHER E.M.	122	203.55	55.00 LAKE HARDEN
RATIKE, HARLAND E.	113	65.00	17.00 CASEY LAKE
** Subtotal **		355.37	108.00
** COUNTY: WR			
UTER RONALD	16	70.00	18.00 MARYSVILLE
** Subtotal **		70.00	18.00
*** Total ***		692.23	201.12

ACQUISITION AS OF 12/31/86					ACQUISITION DURING 1987				ACQUISITION AS OF 12/31/87						
COUNTY	UNITS	TRACTS	TOTAL ACRES	WET ACRES	NEW UNITS	NEW TRACTS	TOTAL ACRES	WET ACRES	UNITS	TRACTS	TOTAL ACRES	WET ACRES	GOAL ACRES	GOAL REMAINING	ACRES
LITCHFIELD WMD															
KANDIYOHI	52	153	11016.65	3950.42		1	39.31	30.12	52	154	11055.96	3980.54	16800	5744.04	
LESUEUR									0	0	0.00	0.00	12230	12230.00	
MCLEOD	2	3	373.98	137.00					2	3	373.98	137.00	7380	7006.02	
MEEKER	10	34	2710.84	884.10	1	4	355.37	108.00	11	38	3066.21	992.10	19440	16373.79	
MORRISON									0	0	0.00	0.00	6320	6320.00	
STEARNS	35	96	7224.35	2682.90		1	19.00	1.00	35	97	7243.35	2683.90	14900	7656.65	
TODD	4	7	496.35	164.00					4	7	496.35	164.00	9560	9063.65	
WRIGHT	3	6	381.63	115.00		1	70.00	18.00	3	7	451.63	133.00	21140	20688.37	
TOTAL	106	299	22203.80	7933.42	1	7	483.68	157.12	107	306	22687.48	8090.54	107770	85082.52	
WINDOM WMD															
COTTONWOOD	7	14	1012.00	265.00	1	2	147.55	24.00	8	16	1159.55	289.00	1650	490.45	
FARIBAULT									0	0	0.00	0.00	5920	5920.00	
FREEBORN	3	5	593.38	280.00					3	5	593.38	280.00	3610	3016.62	
JACKSON	14	25	2579.71	832.00	1	1	241.30	78.00	15	26	2821.01	910.00	3500	678.99	
TOTAL	24	44	4185.09	1377.00	2	3	388.85	102.00	26	47	4573.94	1479.00	14680	10106.06	
TOTAL	130	343	26388.89	9310.42	3	10	872.53	259.12	133	353	27261.42	9569.54	122450	95188.58	

FEE LANDS AS OF 1987



The year was not particularly productive for acquisition. We entered the year with a large list of people who wanted offers but as land prices bottomed out, stabilized, and even promised to rise, our offers were regularly rejected. Farm Bill programs, too, gave landowners other options than to sell their land. But 1987 did produce some noteworthy acquisition opportunities discussed as follows:

- a. The Raymond Swanson Tract (Cosmos WPA Mk-11) was finally approved in January by the Meeker County Board after a lengthy delay brought on by objections of the township to perceived tax loss. This was discussed in the 1986 Narrative Report.

Although not formally accepted, three options completed the tortuous path to certification:

<u>Tract Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Roundout to</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Pietz, Joyce	Cottonwood	Lake Carey	80
Marthaler, Gary	Stearns	Behnen	19
Miller, Alvin	Meeker	Miller	102

- b. The Uter Tract (Marysville WPA Wr-2) was the first tract acquired in Wright County since June 1982. The majority of the members of this County Board have been opposed to Service acquisition and work there has been difficult. This tract, however, was approved unanimously with little opposition surfacing.

At year's end we are working with two other landowners to develop a new WPA near Pelican Lake, a State-designated game lake, in Buffalo Township. These tracts and vicinity are excellent waterfowl habitat. We have met with neighbors and township officials to develop grassroots support for the project. We are hopeful that this project will go and that acquisition in Wright County can make steady progress from now on.

- c. Norway Lake Township in northwestern Kandiyohi County remains the least-disturbed native habitat within this District. Much of it is still rangeland dotted with wetlands. In 1987 we worked with two willing sellers who own significant acreage within this habitat block, much of it adjacent to the Freese WPA (Kd-4. Through both the fee and easement acquisition with hope to protect 6000 to 7000 acres of excellent waterfowl habitat in this vicinity.



9/75

2a

MAK

A view of rolling, glaciated topography typical of northwest Kandiyohi County. Here every depression is a wetland and the hillsides are covered with native prairie. Acquisition is important to preserve wetlands and waterfowl resources.

- d. With the acquisition of 148 acres and an option for 80 acres more, we have almost reached the original goal acres for Cottonwood County. There still remains a few potential new starts as well as important roundout to existing WPAs. An objective for 1988 will be to revise goal acres for this county so that acquisition can continue as needed and without interruption.
- e. A wetland restoration project in central Meeker County received significant attention during the year. A large drained Type IV wetland (50+ acres) could be easily restored with a simple earthen structure and tile break. The difficulty was that the project would involve acquisition from six landowners. After several meetings, topographic surveys, and planning, all landowners agreed to receive offers. At year's end all appraisals have been completed and some offers made. We are hopeful that this effort will bear fruit and a new WPA will emerge. While meeting with all affected landowners prior to the start of new projects has inherent risk, we have found that in some cases it is the best way to assure the success of the project. It appears to be a method of choice where the project is complex such as in major wetland restoration or other significant land use changes.

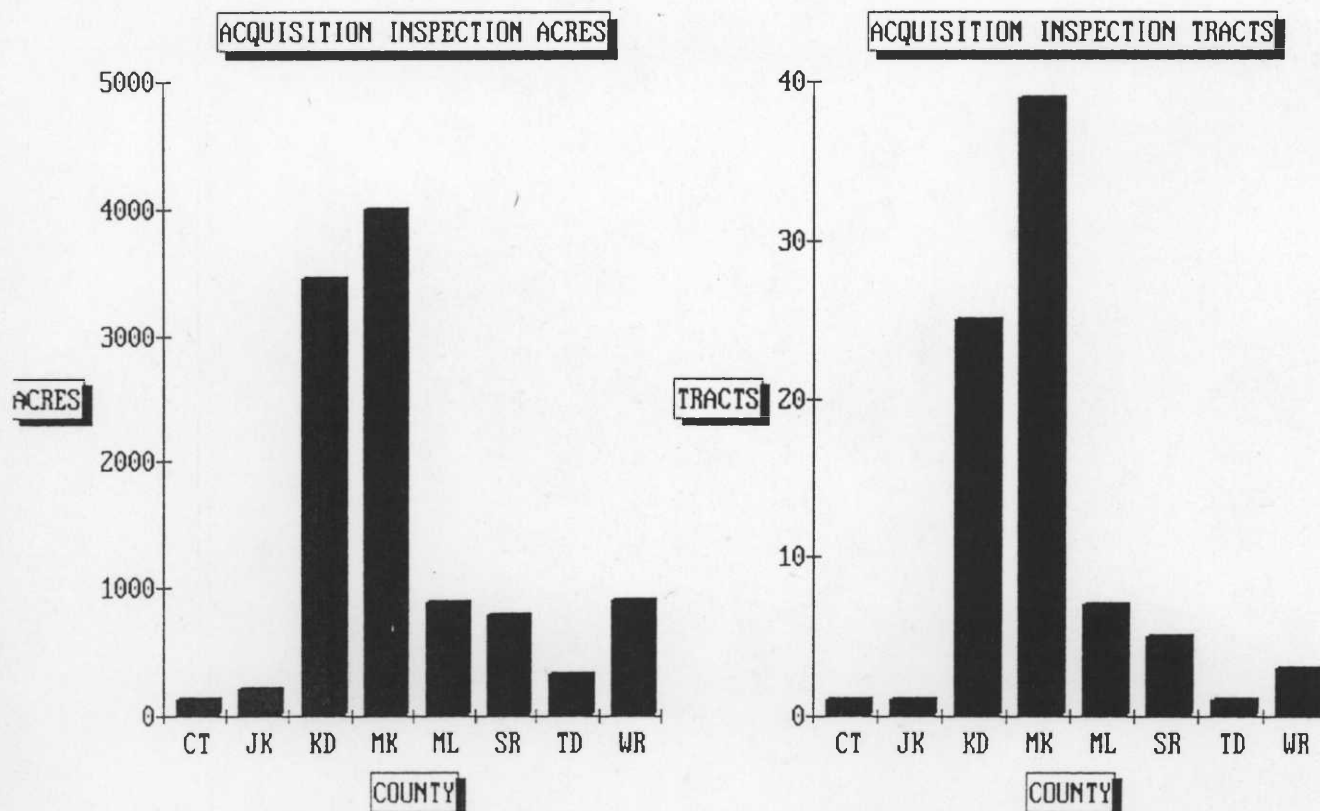
2. Easements

Under the terms of a Fish & Wildlife Service wetland easement, the Service purchases the rights to burn, drain, level, or fill wetland basins. The philosophy of the easement program is simple. Within a wetland complex key the tracts are acquired and managed intensively. Qualifying wetlands within two miles of these fee areas or two miles from other suitable brood marshes such as State Wildlife Management Areas or protected wetlands are placed under easement. In 1987 the easement program received little attention because of the strongly-emphasized fee program. Although no easements were accepted during the year, one option was taken on the Koth Tract (20 wet acres) in Kandiyohi County. These are a complement to the fee program and offer flexibility to our acquisition as we seek to "fit" landowners into some kind of wetland protection program. The following table shows the status of wetland easements under the Litchfield WMD.

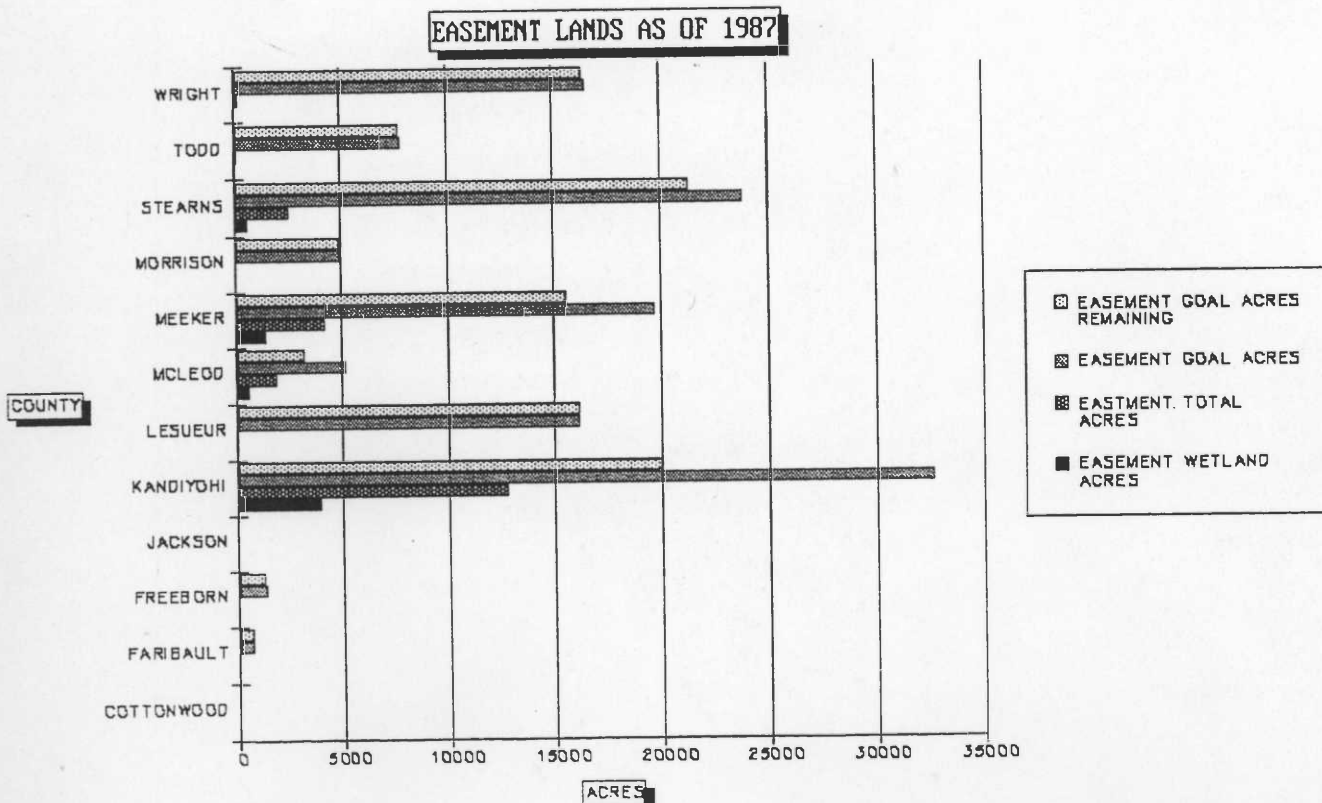
3. Other

a. General

Even though the year produced a number of interested sellers, it was only about 40% that of 1986. During the year 82 tracts were reviewed either from aerial photography or field inspection to see if they qualified for the fee or easement program (38 fee and 44 easement). Fifty-seven (29 fee and 28 easement) qualified for the program. A total of nearly 11,000 acres were inspected as shown below:



EASEMENT STATUS AS OF 12/31/86			ACQUISITION DURING 1987			EASEMENT STATUS AS OF 12/31/87				
COUNTY	NO.	ACRES	WET ACRES	NO.	ACRES	WET ACRES	NO.	ACRES	WET ACRES	GOAL GOAL ACRES ACRES REMAINING
LITCHFIELD WMD										
KANDIYOHI	126	12710.92	3877.20				126	12710.92	3877.20	32660 19949.08
LESUEUR							0	0.00	0.00	16100 16100.00
MCLEOD	34	1923.74	595.00				34	1923.74	595.00	5093 3169.26
MEEKER	71	4174.00	1376.65				71	4174.00	1376.65	19700 15526.00
MORRISON							0	0.00	0.00	4900 4900.00
STEARNS	27	2513.73	605.00				27	2513.73	605.00	23810 21296.27
TODD	1	112.00	16.00				1	112.00	16.00	7800 7688.00
WRIGHT	3	167.00	30.00				3	167.00	30.00	16515 16348.00
TOTAL	262	21601.39	6499.85	0	0.00	0.00	262	21601.39	6499.85	126578 104976.61
WINDOM WMD										
COTTONWOOD	-----NO WETLAND EASEMENT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED FOR THIS COUNTY-----									
FARIBAULT							0	0.00	0.00	700.00 700.00
FREEBORN	1	80.00	15.00				1	80.00	15.00	1292.00 1212.00
JACKSON	-----NO WETLAND EASEMENT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED FOR THIS COUNTY-----									
TOTAL	1	80.00	15.00	0	0.00	0.00	1	80.00	15.00	1992.00 1912.00
GRAND TOTAL	263	21681.39	6514.85	0	0.00	0.00	263	21681.39	6514.85	128570.00 106888.61



We worked with potential sellers on a priority basis. Using seven criteria a tract was scored and scheduled for an appraisal on the basis of that score. Criteria used to score included presence and diversity of wetlands on the tract, percent of area in wetlands within a one-mile radius, numbers of wetlands per square mile within a one-mile radius, soil capability of tilled uplands, size of the tract, solution to management problem, and proximity to other managed wildlife areas of significant size and value. This system has added objectivity to the acquisition process and has been helpful in ranking tracts for appraisal.

To ease the workload created by a backlog of interested sellers, some appraisals were contracted by the Regional Office to private appraisers. In this District, 15 tracts totaling 2050 acres were contracted. At year's end most appraisals have been completed but none have resulted in options yet.

During 1987 we continued to operate under procedural agreement between the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. This agreement requires that each fee and easement tract be presented to respective county boards for certification. Through this process county boards have up to 60 days to consider the Service's acquisition proposal and offer their input into the acquisition process. Final approval, however, still rests with the Minnesota Land Exchange Board comprised of the Governor, Auditor, and Attorney General of the State of Minnesota.

In 1987 the Land Exchange Board continued to rely heavily on the recommendations of county boards, township officials, and adjacent landowners. Some county boards have required the Service to present acquisition proposals to townships as well as their own planning and zoning boards. We have willingly complied with this extra step because ease of acquisition has been directly proportional to the support given us by the local governments and neighbors. Although we continued to meet with some opposition in 1987, our relationships with local governments and adjacent landowners remain, in the most cases, very good. We are still able to have land approved for both fee and easement in spite of the many required steps. This has also had a beneficial side for these steps have led to increased opportunities for communication and contact with these local officials and have significantly improved our image in local communities.

Regional Realty Coordination meetings were scheduled twice during 1987, one in January and one in June. During these meetings personnel from the Regional Office and field stations, management and acquisition, met to discuss the acquisition program and coordinate activities. These meetings continue to provide an excellent forum for communication and problem solving in our acquisition program.

b. Exchanges

Exchanges often require intense and difficult negotiations and may not even involve wetland acres but there are bonafide reasons to pursue them. In 1987 we worked on two exchanges. Background for both can be found in the 1986 Narrative Report.

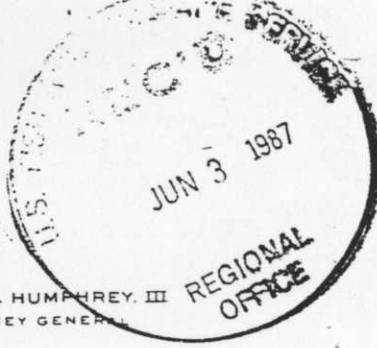
After nearly four years the Harlan Ratike exchange in the Casey Lake WPA (Mk-2) was approved by Congress and has been accepted. The Service divested 73.18 acres of excess upland on the Johnson Tract (No. 12A) for 65.00 acres of uplands and wetlands from Harlan Ratike (Tract No. 113). This exchange rounds out a large Type V wetland and places five additional temporary and seasonal wetlands within the WPA boundary. This exchange fulfills a promise to the Meeker County Board to divest the excess upland and made to the Board when the tract was first approved for acquisition in 1978.

Another exchange with Timothy Slagter was optioned and is awaiting congressional approval. This five-acre exchange will allow restoration of a drained wetland on previously acquired tracts of the Litch/Two Island WPA (Kd-10).

c. Refuge Revenue Sharing

Loss of taxes continues to be the most significant complaint about our acquisition program. Most local governments accept the acquisition program as long as it does not put a hardship on local taxpayers when public lands are taken from the tax rolls. In recent years our percentage of calculated payment has declined from 100% in 1980 to its present 60%.

During 1986 the State Land Exchange Board took the position that loss of tax base and revenue sharing shortfalls did indeed represent a valid reason to deny acquisition. While the counties in this District have yet to turn us down on this basis, we are hearing rumblings and may be very close to that happening. The State of Minnesota has written and requested assistance in this matter from President Reagan. A copy of their letter follows:



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
State of Minnesota

ST. PAUL 55155

June 1, 1987

Handwritten notes:
J
3-4
5-

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President:

The Minnesota Land Exchange Board, comprised of the Governor, Attorney General, and State Auditor, is required by federal and state law to approve all acquisitions of Waterfowl Production Area land by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Minnesota. Pursuant to a procedural agreement entered into between the state and the federal government, these acquisitions also are reviewed by local county boards in the county where the lands are acquired.

A recurring problem with these acquisitions has been the failure of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make the necessary revenue sharing payments ("payments in lieu of taxes" required by federal law) to local units of government whose real estate tax base is reduced by acquisition of private land by the Service. The Service has informed the Land Exchange Board that it has not been fully funded in recent years for the purpose of making these payments. As a result, county boards are sometimes reluctant to support federal acquisitions of Waterfowl Production Area lands. The boards regularly communicate their objections to the Land Exchange Board.

As you are aware, the farm crisis remains severe in Minnesota. Land values have dropped, with the consequence that the real estate tax base for local government has shrunk. Under these circumstances the Land Exchange Board finds it very difficult to ignore adverse comments submitted by local units of government in opposition to federal acquisitions. This situation has been a matter of concern to the members of the Land Exchange Board for some time. The attached resolution illustrates that concern.

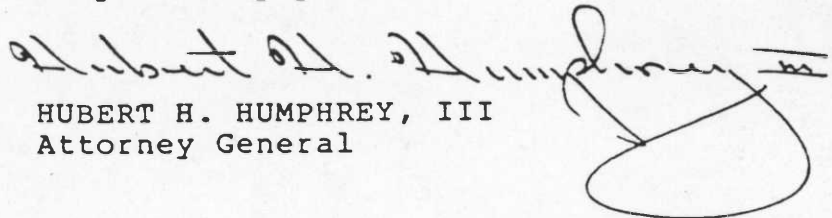
The Board strongly urges you to carefully consider the concerns expressed in this letter and attached resolution, and to support full funding for federal wetland revenue sharing payments in budgets you submit to Congress for Fish and Wildlife Service operations

The President
June 1, 1987
Page 2

so that federal Waterfowl Production Area land acquisition may proceed without further unnecessary difficulty.

If I can provide additional information to you or your staff, please let me know.

Respectfully yours,


HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, III
Attorney General

HHH:1kr

Enc.

cc(w/ enc.):

Governor Rudy Perpich
State Auditor Arne Carlson
Senator Rudy Boschwitz
Senator Dave Durenberger
Representative Timothy Penny
Representative Vin Weber
Representative William Frenzel
Representative Bruce Vento
Representative Martin Sabo
Representative Gerry Sikorski
Representative Arlan Stangeland
Representative James Oberstar
Joseph N. Alexander, Commissioner of Natural Resources
Frank Dunkle, Director, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Harvey K. Nelson, Regional Director, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Steve Akre, Fish & Wildlife Alliance
John Olkers, Minnesota Conservation Federation

Refuge Revenue Sharing checks were distributed to all our counties in April. To avoid any delay in getting payments to ten counties, all checks were sent by certified mail. Letters of explanation were sent with each check and an appropriate news release was sent to local papers throughout the District.

FWS makes revenue sharing payment

By Matthias A. Kerschbaum

A check for \$11,664 was presented to the Meeker County Treasurer by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

These funds help to compensate local units of government for loss of tax revenue on lands owned by the U.S. Government and administered by the Service. The funds may be used for any governmental purpose.

The Refuge Revenue Sharing Act of 1964 and amended in 1978 is the authority for these annual payments. The Act provides that payments be made for all lands administered by the Service. In the North Central Region this includes National Wildlife Refuges, National Fish Hatcheries, Waterfowl Production Areas, and administrative sites.

In addition to counties, school districts and townships receive a portion of the payment, prorated on the basis of what the taxes would have been if the land were privately owned.

The check presented to the Meeker County Treasurer is this year's revenue sharing payment for Federal Waterfowl Production Areas located in Meeker County.

*Litchfield MN.
INDEPENDENT REVIEW
4-23-87*

REFUGE REVENUE SHARING
LITCHFIELD WMD

FISCAL YEAR	KANDIYOHI	MCLEOD	MEEKER	STEARNS	TODD	WRIGHT	TOTAL REVENUE	% CALC. PAYMENT
86	35683.00	2295.00	11664.00	23088.00	1661.00	1731.00	76122.00	60.00
85	34422.00	2973.00	11241.00	24730.00	1688.00	1855.00	76009.00	64.00
84	38777.00	2388.00	8227.00	26452.00	1743.00	2137.00	79724.00	74.00
83	40296.00	2482.00	7460.00	27583.00	1812.00	2221.00	81854.00	77.00
82	48177.00	0.00	7660.00	31854.00	1587.00	2059.00	91337.00	90.60
81	24877.00	0.00	5479.00	15035.00	1535.00	1634.00	48560.00	87.60
80	27638.00	0.00	5627.00	17130.00	1751.00	1851.00	53997.00	100.00
79	20329.00	0.00	2601.00	12996.00	500.00	426.00	36852.00	75.00
78	13600.57	0.00	0.00	8878.92	0.00	0.00	22479.49	52.00
77	18495.00	0.00	0.00	12723.91	0.00	0.00	31218.91	0.00
76	21281.55	0.00	0.00	15351.72	0.00	0.00	36633.27	0.00
75	10664.81	0.00	0.00	7337.22	0.00	0.00	18002.03	0.00
74	8771.82	0.00	0.00	7355.83	0.00	0.00	16127.65	0.00
73	7877.58	0.00	0.00	5576.03	0.00	0.00	13453.61	0.00
72	7487.58	0.00	0.00	5116.63	0.00	0.00	12604.21	0.00
71	7121.58	0.00	0.00	4307.12	0.00	0.00	11428.70	0.00
70	4870.65	0.00	0.00	1883.71	0.00	0.00	6754.36	0.00
69	3928.62	0.00	0.00	1240.02	0.00	0.00	5168.64	0.00
68	3430.94	0.00	0.00	1240.02	0.00	0.00	4670.96	0.00
67	3147.17	0.00	0.00	966.03	0.00	0.00	4113.20	0.00

*** Total ***

Page No. 1
01/13/88

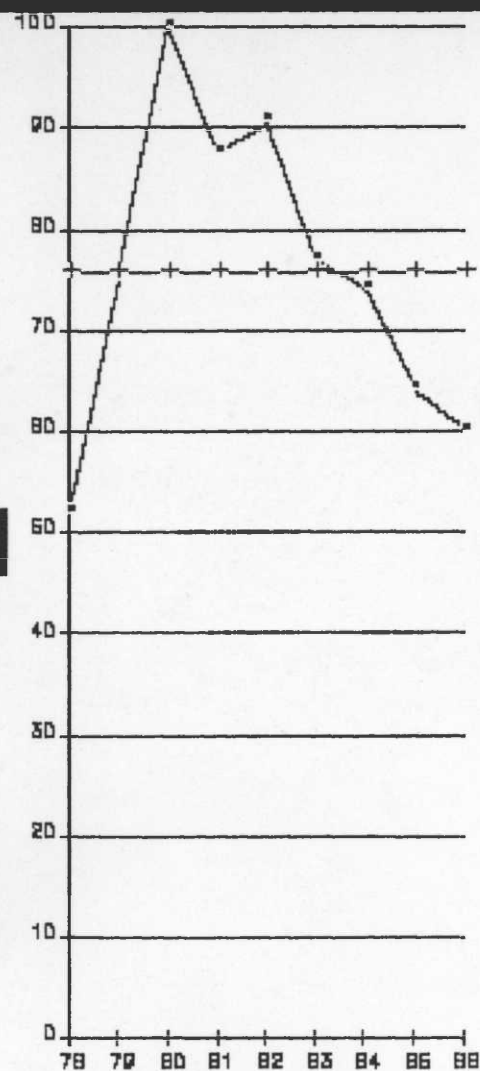
REFUGE REVENUE SHARING
WINDOM WMD

FISCAL YEAR	COTTONWOOD	FARIBAULT	FREEBORN	JACKSON	TOTAL REVENUE	% CALC. PAYMENT
86	6722.00	0.00	3664.00	15160.00	25546.00	60.00
85	7204.00	0.00	3796.00	16247.00	27247.00	64.00
84	8299.00	0.00	4373.00	18715.00	31387.00	74.00
83	8624.00	0.00	4545.00	19448.00	32617.00	77.00
82	10145.00	0.00	5291.00	22879.00	38315.00	90.60
81	3056.00	0.00	5116.00	9280.00	17452.00	87.60
80	3487.00	0.00	3137.00	10588.00	17212.00	100.00
79	2645.00	0.00	0.00	8032.00	10677.00	75.00
78	1806.94	0.00	0.00	3520.19	5327.13	52.00
77	2576.16	0.00	0.00	5018.08	7594.24	0.00
76	3171.37	0.00	0.00	6111.20	9282.57	0.00
75	1630.86	0.00	0.00	7337.22	8968.08	0.00
74	1240.80	0.00	0.00	2863.00	4103.80	0.00
73	1240.86	0.00	0.00	2814.12	4054.98	0.00
72	1240.86	0.00	0.00	2439.33	3680.19	0.00
71	1240.86	0.00	0.00	2025.02	3265.88	0.00
70	953.61	0.00	0.00	1547.17	2500.78	0.00
69	443.00	0.00	0.00	1547.17	1990.17	0.00
68	616.11	0.00	0.00	1547.17	2163.28	0.00
67	249.77	0.00	0.00	1023.73	1273.50	0.00

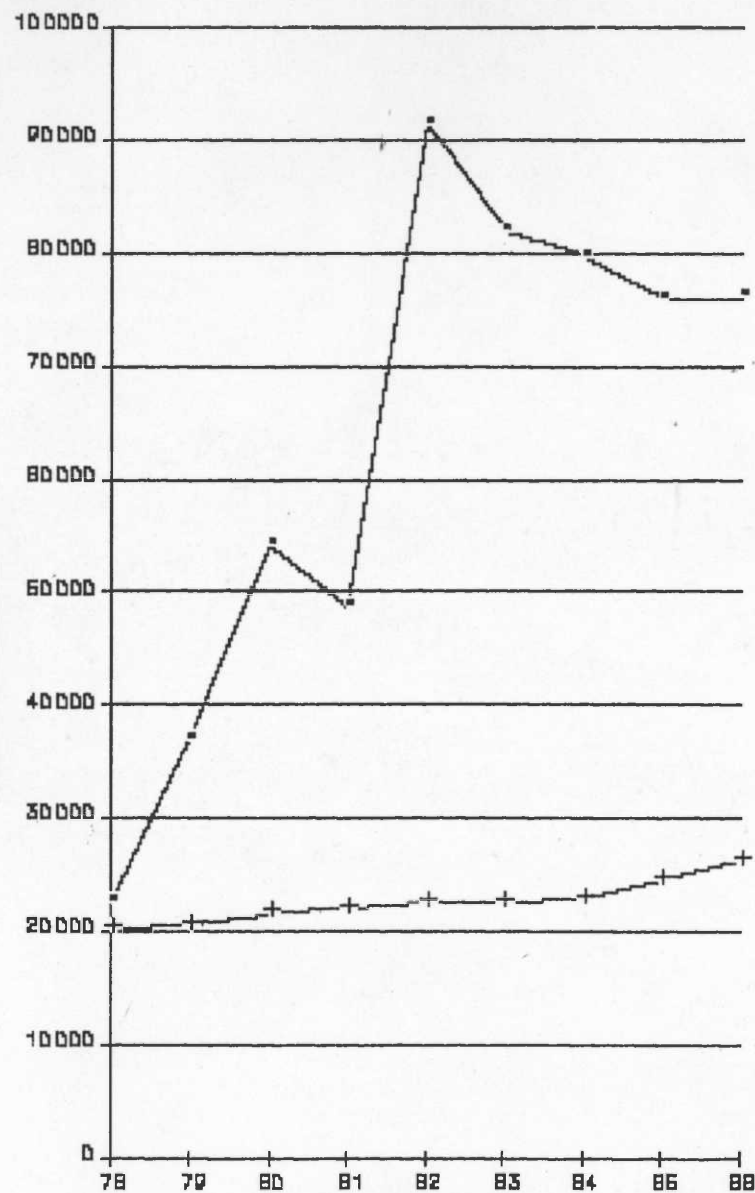
*** Total ***

56593.20 0.00 29922.00 158142.40 254657.60

REVENUE SHARING ANNUAL PAYMENTS TO COUNTIES



FISCAL YEAR



FISCAL YEAR

d. Farm Bill

The Food Security Act of 1985 (Farm Bill) presented significant acquisition opportunities in 1987. This Act contains three major provisions or programs which have the potential to benefit wetland preservation throughout the Nation: Swampbuster, Conservation Reserve Program, and the Farm loan Program. In 1987 the Conservation Reserve and Farm Loan programs offered the Service new opportunities for wetland preservation and involved an acquisition element.

Conservation Reserve Program

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) focused on the protection of highly-erodible land by having the owner put these lands into vegetative cover for a 10-year period. For this the landowner received Federal cost-sharing to plant the cover and an annual payment for the 10-year period.

The Service targeted \$100,000 in Minnesota to provide an added cash incentive to landowners of CRP tracts to develop, improve, or maintain waterfowl habitats on their property. This was to be a "Piggyback Agreement" on top of the existing CRP agreement and for which qualifying landowners would receive an additional \$5 per acre per year for the 10-year CRP contracts. For this payment the Service purchased the right to conduct certain waterfowl management activities that included:

- Restore wetlands with landowner approval
- Develop and maintain nesting cover
- Install nesting structures
- Construct predator barriers
- Conduct seasonal predator management

An example of the Wildlife Management Agreement follows:

5. The Service shall be permitted to carry out those wetland restoration practices, including flooding, depicted on the attached map.

6. The Service shall be permitted to develop predator barriers, i.e., islands, fences, peninsula cutoffs as designated on the attached map.

The Service agrees to compensate the Cooperator by payment of \$5.00 per acre per crop year. Payment shall be made by November 15 of each year for the preceding crop year. This obligation shall, for future years, be contingent upon the availability of appropriations.

No member of or delegate to Congress, or resident commissioner, shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement, or to any benefit arising from it. However, this clause does not apply to this Agreement to the extent that this Agreement is made with a corporation for the corporation's general benefit.

The Service assumes no liability for injury other than injury caused by its own negligence, on the above acreage.

The Service assumes no jurisdiction over the above acreage for purposes of controlling trespass or noxious weeds, granting rights-of-way, and other incidents of ownership.

This Agreement may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties, and terminated by thirty (30) days' written notice by either party. Upon termination, the Service shall be entitled to remove any wildlife management structures placed on the acreage at its expense. The Service shall have no obligation to restore the land to its original condition upon expiration or termination of this Agreement. Should this Agreement be terminated by the Cooperator within four (4) years from the date of any capital improvement as identified in items 5 and 6, above, the Cooperator shall reimburse the Service for those improvements.

Field Representative
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Cooperator

Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date:

Wildlife Management Agreement

This Agreement dated _____ between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service ("Service") and _____ (Cooperator(s)) is entered into pursuant to authority contained in section 1 of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. § 661, and section 7 of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, 16 U.S.C. § 742f(a)(4).

The purpose of this Agreement is to support a Wildlife Management Program by encouraging landowners who own uplands in or near valuable wetland complexes to participate in a program designed to enhance those lands for wildlife management purposes. Through this Agreement, landowners will be compensated for undertaking, or permitting the Service or its designees, to undertake, certain specified wildlife management activities.

Throughout this Agreement, the term "Service" shall be deemed to include the Service and its designees.

The Cooperator(s) agree(s) to place the following _____ acres designated and described on the attached map (incorporated by reference herein) into the Wildlife Management Program for the period 3/1/87 to 3/1/97. The Service shall be permitted ingress and egress at all reasonable times during the duration of this Agreement to and from all of the above described lands for purposes of carrying out the provisions of this Agreement, including scientific studies.

The Cooperator agrees to the following terms and conditions with respect to the aforementioned lands. All activities undertaken pursuant to these terms and conditions shall be consistent with the provisions of any existing Conservation Reserve Contract under the Conservation Reserve Program.

1. The Service shall be permitted to conduct seasonal predator management during the period 3/1 to 7/15 of each year.
2. The Service shall be permitted to erect nest structures in areas designated on the attached map.
3. The Service shall be permitted to manage vegetation in accordance with a mutually agreed upon plan.
4. The Cooperator agrees to plant those seed mixtures mutually agreed upon by the Cooperator and the Service and shall maintain such vegetative cover to achieve the desired wildlife management benefits sought.

We had no idea what the response to this "Piggyback" agreement would be but most of us were initially skeptical and felt participation would be low. With that thought we sent out letters to WPA fee and easement neighbors, news releases to local papers, and general information through channels that would reach rural landowners and waited.

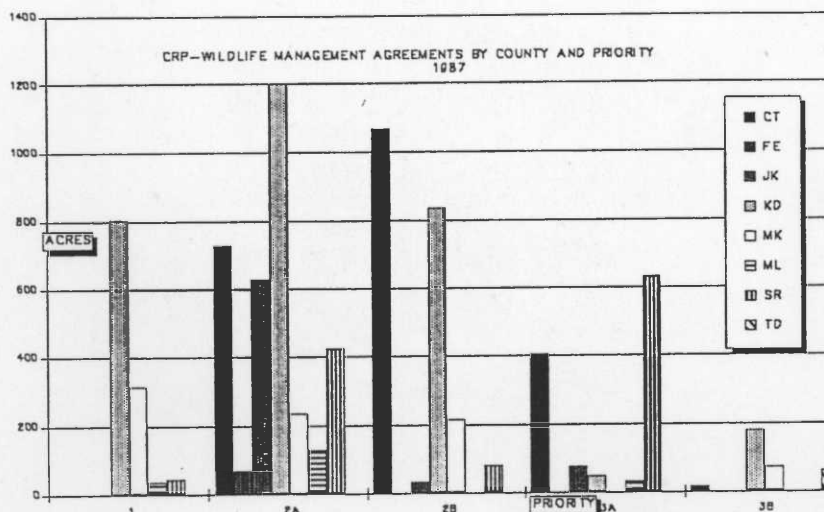
It wasn't long before we were flooded with responses. Realty Specialists handled the sign-up and answered the numerous questions. The sign-up acres were more than four times that for which we had money. Because we had tentatively signed 80,000 acres and had funds for 20,000 acres, a priority system had to be developed to select the final tracts.

CRP tracts were inspected and placed in priority order. Priorities were based on whether a tract:

1. Encompassed all or part of a Service easement
- 2a. Was adjacent to Service fee or easement or State Wildlife Management Area
- 2b. Was within one mile of Service fee or easement or State Wildlife Management Area
- 3a. Did not meet categories 1 or 2 but contained restorable wetlands
- 3b. Fell outside of the above criteria

In the Litchfield District we received 322 responses to the piggyback effort of which 117 (approximately 8,500 acres) qualified.

This District was assigned a ceiling of 3,990 acres as its part of the 20,000 acre state total. Sixty-one tracts totaling 3,878.9 acres were actually selected using the priority system. We never got past Category 2 and could not even include all of those. We received Congressional Inquiries concerning why some landowners could not participate. Such inquiries indicated just how much interest there had been in the program.



The fun part began shortly after as we began habitat improvement on piggyback lands and sought out candidate wetlands to restore. This activity is discussed in Section F.2.

Now the piggyback money is gone but there is still landowner interest to restore wetlands on CRP tracts. How to work with interested landowners was the problem that faced us. With a new idea originally developed by the Mid-Continent Waterfowl Management Unit at Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and using a "free lease", the Service received the right to restore wetlands on three additional CRP tracts in Meeker and Kandiyohi Counties. The Service paid nothing for the lease and the landowner paid nothing for the restoration work. Assistance with the development of the free lease was provided by Realty Specialists. This activity is expected to increase significantly in 1988 as we try to restore more wetlands on CRP tracts. An example of the "free lease" follows.

"FREE" LEASE

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT, dated September 29, 19 87, is between

Name:

Address:

Phone:

, wildlife cooperators, and the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

_____ hereby donate to the
Fish & Wildlife Service certain wildlife management rights on land owned
by them in Meeker County, State of Minnesota, described as
follows:

T. 118 N., R. 30 W., 5th P.M.
Section 4

The restoration of one Type III wetland.

The wildlife cooperators in signing this Agreement join as participants in a Wildlife Management Program and grant to the Service the authority to complete the wildlife habitat developments described in the attached special provisions (Exhibit A). The described habitat work will be paid for by the Fish & Wildlife Service.

The term of this Agreement will be for the crop years beginning in 19 87 and ending October 1, 19 97. During this term the land is concurrently enrolled in the USDA Conservation Reserve Program.

During the term of this Agreement, it may be modified at any time by mutual written agreement. The cooperator agrees to leave the habitat developments in place for the full term of the Agreement.

At the end of the Agreement term, the structures will become the property of the wildlife cooperator.

The wildlife cooperator is responsible for noxious weed control in accordance with Minnesota Law.

The Service does not assume jurisdiction over the premises by this Agreement. The wildlife cooperator retains all rights to control trespass and retains all responsibility for taxes, assessments, and damage claims.

The Fish & Wildlife Service reserves the right to enter the land at reasonable times for wildlife management purposes and to inspect completed work.

Specific work planned is shown in Exhibit A.

In the event funds are not available to do the wildlife habitat work within the period of time or in the manner prescribed in the special provisions, the Service will advise the wildlife cooperator of that fact.

Wildlife cooperator guarantees ownership of the above-described land and warrants that there are no outstanding rights which would interfere with the Wildlife Management Agreement.

Wildlife Cooperator's Signature



Fish & Wildlife Service Signature

Farm Loan Program

Administered by Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), this program holds real potential for wetland and other important resource conservation. By cooperative agreement between the Service and FmHA, when land reverts to FmHA inventory, Service biologists screen the tracts, look for important resources and recommend to FmHA ways to protect them. Important resources include wetlands, floodplains, endangered species, or fish and wildlife populations of local importance.

Protection for these resources can be accomplished by deed restrictions or conservation easements placed on the property before the land is sold. These restrictions protect existing wetlands from future disturbance or permit restoration of previously altered wetlands and are to be administered by the Service, state, or other non-profit conservation agency.

In late 1987 we received a list of 17 FmHA tracts in six counties totaling 2,300 acres. To date, we have inspected four tracts in two counties totaling 620 acres. One of these, the 270-acre Wilfred Crusoe Tract in northwest Meeker County, became the first activity of this kind in Minnesota.

Working from ground zero and with the help of Eric Nelson, Service Farm Bill Coordinator for Minnesota, a process was developed to identify and protect the important resources of the Crusoe Farm. The tract served as an excellent first example because of the diversity of wetlands and restorable wetlands within it. FmHA authorized the restoration of 14 wetlands on this tract and the work was accomplished in November (see Section F.2.). Before this land is sold these deed restrictions will be transferred to the National Wildlife Refuge System by FmHA.



11/25/87

87-14-2

RMB

Important resources on this 270-acre FmHA inventory tract in Meeker County were protected with deed restrictions. In addition to existing wetlands, 14 drained or partially-drained wetlands were restored with ditch plugs.

The deed restrictions, map and news release about the Crusoe Tract project will help explain the process that has emerged from this first effort. We know and are excited that this work activity will be expanded in 1988.

FmHA fields in Meeker County make history

The Wildlife values of 83 acres of land owned by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in northwestern Meeker County were recently enhanced by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service contractors and will now be permanently protected by habitat saving FmHA deed restrictions.

This is one of the first activities of its kind in the Nation and a first in the State of Minnesota.

Under the Food Security Act of 1985, or Farm Bill as it is more simply called, land which reverts back to the FmHA is screened by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists and Soil Conservation Service (SCS) personnel.

This is done to comply with existing Federal laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

The biologists look for significant wildlife and fish populations, wetlands, floodplains, or endangered species values and help the FmHA develop ways to protect these important natural resources for the future.

One way protection can be accomplished is by deed restrictions which limit or exclude land use practices that could damage important resources. Other ways are conservation easements that assign the protection and management of important resources to another level of government or non-profit conservation organization. These groups might include the State Department of Natural Resources, counties, or conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited.

example in Meeker County may help to illustrate how this process works on a local level. A 270-acre tract located in northwestern Meeker County was included in the inventory lands of the FmHA. On this 270 acres wetlands and other important resources were identified by FmHA, SCS, and the Service. There was a total of 83 acres of wetlands, timber, and grassland; resources considered important to migratory birds and other wildlife. Most of these acres were in natural wetland basins however, there were 14 drained wetlands on this land.

Following an inspection of the farm, the Service recommended deed restrictions to FmHA that would prevent drainage or filling of existing wetlands and permit restoration of the 14 drained

wetlands by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

After acceptance by FmHA these recommendations will be written as land use restrictions in the final deed. The land will be resold into private ownership with deed restrictions protecting the wetlands in place. With these restrictions and an SCS Conservation Plan, these county and national resources are protected for the future. In this case the deed restrictions were assigned to the Service as the responsible agency. The Service will continue to work with the new landowner to insure protection of the identified resources.

Not long ago land management by the Service was confined to public land: Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) or National Wildlife Refuges. Now, in addition to our

other responsibilities, we are busy screening the FmHA lands in 13 counties of central and southern Minnesota. Our new role on private land as defined by the Farm Bill has given our agency a much broader perspective in working with wetlands and other important resources. This is an exciting time for those of us concerned with conserving the resources of this Nation and our state, concludes the report.



Another FmHA tract in Kandiyohi County also received attention under this program. The Akerson Tract, an 80-acre parcel adjacent to the Zwemke WPA (Kd-2) came on FmHA inventory. Because of its proximity to the WPA we have asked FmHA to transfer the tract in fee to the Service. A process for doing this is being developed and FmHA has agreed to remove the tract from sale until it can be transferred.

D. PLANNING

1. Master Plan

Litchfield WMD is composed of 107 widely-scattered tracts of land, 83 miles between the two WPAs on the extreme edges of the District. The WPAs range in size from 16 to 910 acres. Windom WMD has 26 WPAs of 17 to 940 acres in size and 110 miles between the outer WPAs. A single master planning document for each District would be cumbersome at best and could not realistically expect to address all of the needs and problems of each WPA.

To insure that all of the effort involved in the master planning process results in a product that is usable to the field stations, the Minnesota Wetland Complex developed a "unit plan" format in which the inventories and needs of an individual WPA are described in a single document.

These unit plans contain aerial photos, survey information, soil and topographic maps, land use reservations, previous wildlife observations, past development, current habitat descriptions, and the future development needs of a single WPA in a concise, easily-read format.

Collectively, these individual plans provide the means to summarize the amount and types of development needed for the entire District so that priorities can be set, funding needs documented, and field work coordinated. Additionally, unit plans provide a valuable time-saving means of acquiring information to handle requests for rights-of-way (ROW) and Special Use Permits and greatly simplify the preparation of environmental assessments. Much of the information from the plans is entered into a computer data base for rapid inventory, sorting, and retrieval.

Realizing the great potential value of these plans we take their preparation very seriously and put a lot of time and work into them. The unit plans are updated as roundout is added to existing WPAs.

2. Management Plan

Nothing to report.

3. Public Participation

The Mayor of Litchfield received word that we were considering the construction of a new office/shop complex. He sent this office a letter opposing a move from the City.

4. Compliance with Environmental and Cultural Resource Mandates

As new lands are purchased, most are identified by the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer as having a potential for historical, cultural, or archaeological sites. That office suggests a cultural survey be conducted for any proposed earthwork within 1000 feet of a major body of water. Region III's Historic Preservation Officer challenged the State's position regarding the Whiteford (Ct-2), Gravley (Kd-24), Malmquist (Kd-24), Schmit (Mk-5), and Jacobson (Mk-7) Tracts on the basis that project location and size were so small that projects were very unlikely to affect unreported prehistoric properties. The State again reviewed the projects and reversed themselves concluding that the structures did not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

An early prehistoric site was found on McCormick Lake WPA (Sr-16) during a cultural survey in 1986. It was not connected with any proposed earthwork site but had the initial appearance as being eligible for the National Register. A contract was awarded to Christina Harrison, Archaeological Research Services, Minneapolis, at a cost of \$2491 for an indepth study of the area. The preliminary results of this survey recommends that it not be nominated for the National Register. It appears the township road cut through the heart of the site.

A contract for archaeological surveys covering six WPAs in the Windom District and four WPAs in the Litchfield District was also awarded to Christina Harrison for \$7629. This contract eliminated the backlog of old units needing surveys. The following indicates WPAs surveyed and cleared for construction work:

<u>WPA</u>	<u>Planned Construction</u>		
	<u>Ditch Plug/ tile break</u>	<u>Debris Burial</u>	<u>Road Improvement</u>
Iowa (Jk-6)	4		1.0
Little Sioux River	7	2	.5
Loon Lake (Jk-13)	2		.25
Rush Lake (Jk-5)			.3
Sioux Forks (Jk-10)			
Beuthien Tract	13	1	.5
String Lake (Jk-3)	1		.5
Litch/Two Island (Kd-10)	28		1.7
Miller Lake (Mk-10)	6	1	.4
Oak (Sr-26)	4		
Sand Lake (Sr-29)	2	2	.8

Since the site appears to have cultural values, a proposed boat ramp site on Rush Lake (Jk-5) will likely be planned to avoid disturbing the ground and adding fill only.

The site for the City of Litchfield's proposed new airport continues to be developed despite repeated objections by the Fish & Wildlife Service. Views of the Service have been expressed by Ecological Services, St. Paul Field Office. Earthmoving for the runway began in late fall.

The runway will sit between numerous marshes and will run parallel to and less than 500 feet from Lake Andrew Nelson which is a 148-acre marsh. East Lake Ripley is another large 360-acre wetland .45 mile to the west; Casey Lake WPA (Mk-2) is about one-half mile away from the approach flight path. Two wetlands of 24 and 26 acres lie 1000 feet west. Round Lake, a 272-acre open lake, is within a quarter mile of the approach flight path. The Service was concerned about the probability of bird strikes and other wildlife impacts because of the close proximity to the numerous lakes and wetland areas. In the Service's view, the environmental concerns were not adequately considered by the City, consultants, or Federal Aviation Administration prior to final site selection. Executive Order 11990 on wetlands as well as the NEPA process was totally ignored with efforts instead directed to getting authorization for, and attempting to mitigate the environmental and safety problems that were so apparent with the City's preferred and recommended site.

The Federal Aviation Administration recommended the following:

1. Runway safety areas cleared to transport category standards. This will eliminate the wetland habitat on the north end of the runway which currently supports nesting habitat.
2. Wetland habitat planned as mitigation should not be constructed. No bird habitat should be developed within 10,000 feet of the runway.
3. As partial mitigation for wildlife habitat destruction, a study should be initiated which characterizes wildlife activity on and near the proposed airport site.
4. The City should request, encourage, and work with the County to see that zoning is in place to restrict enlargement or enhancement of Casey Lake WPA.

Casey Lake WPA is currently 313 acres in size. Proposed roundout to Casey Lake WPA calls for 427 additional acres with the Lake Andrew Nelson proposed as the west boundary of the unit.



11/25/87 87-14-21 RMB

Work on the City of Litchfield airport has started even though environmental concerns have not been met. The project may hinder management of Casey Lake WPA for waterfowl.

In the last couple of years turkey barns have been sprouting up like thistle in Kandiyohi County. The Earl B. Olson Farms have expanded their operation into Meeker County. They proposed to construct eight large total confinement barns capable of holding 15,000 turkeys each. The watershed of the area flows to the north and into portions of the Harvey WPA (Mk-5). Two local landowners opposed the project saying that possible pollution and damage to the rural environment made the turkey barns unsuitable for that particular area. The Meeker County Planning and Zoning Board approved construction.

5. Research and Investigations

Litchfield District (Nest Dragging Study 32588-1)

The Litchfield WMD nest dragging study was initiated in 1983 and continued through 1987 to provide data on species, nest densities, and nesting success on selected WPAs. This information is used to determine more accurately and conclusively the problems and potentials of upland nesting ducks in the District.

The early findings of the study indicated that certain wild predators (particularly red fox, striped skunk, and raccoon) were having a serious negative impact on upland nesting ducks in the District. To combat this problem a seasonal predator management program was initiated in 1985 and expanded in 1986. With the results of this program it was concluded that professionally applied predator removal during the nesting season could significantly increase nesting success.

The controversial nature of this type of program required that the Wetland Complex Office prepare an environmental assessment. Unfortunately this was not approved in time for the 1987 nesting season and the program was postponed.

During the 1987 nesting season a total of 278 acres of upland grass was searched on the following WPAs: Litchfield (Mk-1), Lindgren Lake (Kd-8), Burr Oak Lake (Kd-27), Burbank (Kd-20), and Swan Lake (Kd-3). Nest dragging was carried out between May 6 and July 6 with all but two areas being searched three times. Litchfield WPA was searched four times and a newly-cleared island with minimal nesting cover on Burbank WPA was searched only once.

Nests were located by dragging a cable chain drag between two 4-wheel drive vehicles using one or two spotters. The islands on Swan Lake WPA and Burbank WPA were searched systematically by three or four people on foot beating the vegetation with six-foot sticks. Information on species, nest age and vegetation type and density were recorded for each nest and when nest fate was determined used to calculate Mayfield success. Location and vegetative features of each area searched were also recorded on separate cards. All of this information was then sent to the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center for their waterfowl studies.

A total of 89 duck nests (36 mallard and 53 blue-winged teal) were found on the 278 acres of grasslands searched. Following established guidelines it was determined that a mallard nest on Burbank WPA was abandoned because of investigator disturbances and not used in the calculations. Of the 88 usable nests, 29 hatched and 59 were predated resulting in 13.45% Mayfield success. The data is summarized as follows:

Litchfield WMD

<u>Acres</u> <u>Searched</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Nests</u>	<u>Successful</u> <u>Nests</u>	<u>Observed</u> <u>Success</u>	<u>Mayfield</u> <u>Success</u>	<u>Mayfield</u> <u>Nests</u> <u>Initiated</u>	<u>Mayfield</u> <u>Nests/</u> <u>Acre</u>
278	89	29	32.95%	13.45%	216	0.78

From our data we estimated that 6880 ducks were produced on the Litchfield District or .29 ducks per acre.

Even though a seasonal predator management program was not in effect this year, the Swan Lake (Kd-3) island situation had been considered a barrier to predation management. Unfortunately, the lack of runoff left the marsh nearly two feet lower than last year, exposing mudflats in some areas. This permitted predators to gain access to the island destroying two active nests found during the nest searches and was likely responsible for the destruction or abandonment of four others found on the first search. Mayfield success on this area was calculated to be only .03%.

Litchfield District (Snail Parasite Study 32588-2)

Bonita Olson, a student at St. Cloud State University, volunteered with the Litchfield WMD for 11 weeks in early spring. As part of her academic requirements, she collected different species of aquatic snails infected with Trematode Larval to determine parasitic infection level potential on certain WPA marshes.

The snails were kept in small water-filled jars for approximately one week until the larvae or cercariae were shed. Microscopic examination of the snails at this time would reveal any shed cercariae on the host snails. After all collected snails were examined no cercariae were found.

Windom District (Nest Dragging Study 32587-1)

This was the second year of the Windom nesting study. The primary factors to be investigated remain the same as last year: (1) determine species of ducks nesting in upland grass habitats on the Windom District (2) determine nest densities (nests/acre) on the study areas, and (3) determine nesting success and the factors affecting success.

Two WPAs, Little Sioux River (Jk-1) and Loon Lake (Jk-13) were selected for the study because both included good wetland complexes and sizeable acreages of warm season native grass and cool season grass cover types that could be nest searched. A total of 150.3 acres of upland grasslands was searched: 79.5 acres of cool season grass on Little Sioux River WPA and 60.5 acres warm season native grass and 10.3 acres of cool season grass on Loon Lake WPA.

Nest dragging procedures were the same as those used in the Litchfield study. Nest dragging commenced on April 29 and the last search was conducted on June 11. This was approximately three weeks earlier than last year because of an early spring in the District. Nest and habitat record cards were completed and sent to the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center when the fate of all nests was determined.

Thirty-six nests (16 mallard and 20 blue-winged teal) were found on the 159.4 acres of grassland searched. Of these 12 hatched and 24 were predated.

The data is summarized below:

Windom WMD

<u>Acres</u> <u>Searched</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Nests</u>	<u>Successful</u> <u>Nests</u>	<u>Observed</u> <u>Success</u>	<u>Mayfield</u> <u>Success</u>	<u>Mayfield</u> <u>Nests/</u> <u>Initiated</u>	<u>Mayfield</u> <u>Nests/</u> <u>Acre</u>
150.3	36	12	33.3%	13.36%	90	0.60

We estimate that 1060 birds were produced on the Windom District or .25 birds per acre.

In 1986 the Mayfield nest success rate for the District was 34.27%, considerably higher than the 13.36% found in 1987.

6. Other

a. RMMS

Deficiency lists for facilities and equipment were completed and the list for buildings updated. All reports were sent to the Regional Office. To obtain information on facilities, permanent and temporary staff are assigned to check different areas once a month at the same time recording enforcement problems, public use, and wildlife use. The assignments are rotated to ensure all areas are visited at least once per year. All deficiencies are then entered into the Station's computer data base file. From this the decision can be made as to which projects can be funded using existing sources and which projects require ARMMs or construction funding in future years.

E. ADMINISTRATION

1. Personnel

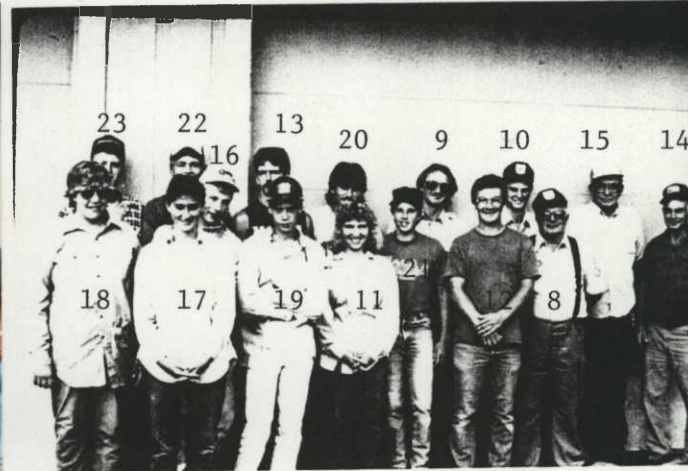


Permanent Full-Time Staff, Litchfield Wetland Management District, MN

(Left to Right)

1. Glen R. Miller, Asst. Wetland Manager, GS-11, PFT (EOD 8/26/79)
2. Henry W. Trebesch, Maintenance Worker, WG-7, PFT (EOD 1/7/79)
3. Robert A. Schulz, Soil Conservationist, GS-9, PFT (EOD 1/6/85)
4. H. Adrienne Tuch, Biological Technician, GS-5, PFT (resigned 12/18/87)
5. Robert M. Bruesewitz, Asst. Wetland Manager, GS-11, PFT (EOD 4/17/83)
6. Elaine B. Lindquist, Secretary (Typing), GS-5, PFT (EOD 7/2/79)
7. Matthias A. Kerschbaum, Wetland Manager, GS-12, PFT (EOD 11/5/78)

a. Temporary Staff



8. Leo P. Huhn, Tractor Operator, WG-5 TFT (3/30/87-11/20/87)
9. Craig W. Lee, Biological Aid (Wildlife), GS-4 TFT (3/30/87-10/30/87)
10. John T. Haffley, Biological Aid (Wildlife), GS-4 TFT 3/30/87-10/30/87
11. Jean A. Evanoff, Biological Aid (Wildlife), GS-4 TFT 6/1/87-8/21/87
12. Mortie P. Berg, Laborer, 7/20/87-9/25/87)
13. James R. Bode, Laborer, 7/20/87-9/25/87)

Green Thumb

14. Lawrence A. Nohner, Laborer (3/16/87-12/31/87)
15. William Schroeder, Laborer (3/16/87-8/4/87) & 9/28/87-10/28/87)

Youth Conservation Corps

16. Todd D. Matheson, Enrollee (6/8/87-8/7/87)
17. Kimberly D. Oberg, Enrollee (6/8/87-7/31/87)
18. Kristine A. Peterson, Enrollee (6/8/87-7/31/87)
19. Travis J. Plut, Enrollee (6/8/87-8/5/87)

Work Study

20. Michael A. Scott, Student, Vermilion Community College (6/1/87-8/10/87)
21. Curtis M. Vacik, Student, Vermilion Community College (6/8/87-8/19/87)

Minnesota Youth Program

22. Thomas Garding, Laborer (6/22/87-7/31/87)
23. Jason Zins, Laborer (6/29/87-8/28/87)

Detailed from other Stations

24. Harlen Lightwine, Equipment Operator, DeSoto NWR (8/24-28/87)
25. Doug Siler, Equipment Operator, Mingo NWR (8/31-9/4/87)
26. Bob Woodsum, Equipment Operator, Crab Orchard NWR (9/21-10/1/87)

b. Training

The following training courses and workshops were completed during the year:

<u>Training</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Participant</u>
MN Pesticide Applicator Course 5087B	Mankato, MN	1/14	Miller/Trebesch
Law Enforcement Refresher	LaCrosse, WI	2/23-27	Kerschbaum, Miller
Standard Field Sobriety Testing	LaCrosse, WI	2/26	Kerschbaum, Miller
How to Handle Conflict	Minneapolis, MN	2/24	Bruesewitz
Law Enforcement Refresher	LaCrosse, WI	3/2-6	Bruesewitz
Standard Field Sobriety Testing	LaCrosse, WI	3/5	Bruesewitz
Basic Fire Training, S-130/190	MN Valley NWR	4/7-8	Kerschbaum, Tuch
First Aid/CPR	Litchfield, MN	6/16&18	Evanoff, YCC enrollees
MN Pesticide Applicator Correspondence Course (General, Ground, ROW)		6/17	Haffley, Lee
Retirement seminar	Fergus Falls	8/25	Bruesewitz, Schulz
MN Pesticide Applicator Correspondence Course for Rights-of-way)		Oct.	Miller, Trebesch,
MN Pesticide Applicator Correspondence Course for aquatics, general, ground		Oct.	Schulz
<u>Meetings/Workshops</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Participant</u>
Realty Coordination Meeting	Detroit Lakes, MN	1/21-22	Kerschbaum, Miller
Information Exchange w/DNR Area Wildlife Managers	Litchfield, MN	2/11	Kerschbaum, Miller, Schulz
4-square mile Breeding Pair Survey	Fergus Falls, MN	2/19	Miller, Tuch
Herbicide Application (Brush)	Willmar, MN	3/5	Schulz
Federal Women's Day	Minneapolis, MN	5/28	Lindquist, Tuch
Realty Coordination Meeting	Willmar, MN	6/17-18	Kerschbaum, Miller
Computer workshop	MN Valley NWR	7/2	Kerschbaum
Conservation Reserve Program	Morris, MN	7/16	Kerschbaum
Farmers Home Administration	St. Paul, MN	7/30	Kerschbaum
Administrative Workshop	Morris, MN	8/5	Lindquist
Conservation Reserve Program/Wildlife Management	Morris	8/12	Kerschbaum, Miller, Trebesch
Wetland Management Workshop	Fond du Lac, WI	8/31-9/4	Bruesewitz

Wetland Restoration Workshop	Alexandria, MN	10/1	Kerschbaum, Schulz
Computer Workshop	Fergus Falls	10/20	Kerschbaum, Lindquist
Public Use Training	DeSoto NWR	10/26-30	Bruesewitz
Farm Bill Workshop	Alexandria, MN	10/28	Kerschbaum, Schulz
Farm Bill Workshop	Alexandria, MN	11/10	Kerschbaum

2. Youth Programs

Youth Conservation Corps

This was the sixth year for the nonresidential YCC program here. Due to funding shortages the program was cut from the usual five enrollees down to four.

The jobs were announced with the distribution of brochures in local school districts and employment agencies. The recruitment brought a total of 48 applications to the Litchfield WMD. Eleven of the applications were from females and 37 from males. There were four positions to be filled, two by females and two by males. The applications were separated by sex and random selection was made by an employee of the local newspaper. Alternate applications were drawn in the event that one of those originally selected could not fulfill their duties.

On June 4, 1987, there was an informational meeting held to introduce the YCC enrollees and their parents to functions of the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the Litchfield area. A slide show was presented to outline the duties and purpose of the YCC program. A short film was then shown that emphasized the importance of the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the preservation and protection of local wetlands and waterfowl production areas.

The environmental education requirements of the YCC program were met by introducing subjects of interest daily. The group leader was certified through Project Wild and Project Learning Tree and used that knowledge to aid in presenting topics to the enrollees. The enrollees learned the subjects through discussion, question and answer sessions, hands-on participation and active involvement in games and experiences.

The following is a summary of work projects completed:

<u>Project (Location)</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Appraised Value</u>	<u>Enrollees Work Hours</u>
Fence construction (Mk-3, Sr-6, Sr-32, Wr-1)	6,468 ft	\$2700	328
Paint buildings (shop site)	3 bldgs	2935	440
Shop maintenance (shop)	4 projects	460	70
Vehicle maintenance (shop)	8 vehicles	200	35
Debris clean-up (building sites, Mk-7)	2 acres	460	64
Fencing parking lots (Mk-3, Mk-5, Sr-32)	3 lots	600	90
Topographic surveys (Kd-21)	2 projects	145	18
Fence removal (Kd-10, Mk-7)	10,718 ft	1425	200
Fence repair (Sr-6)	2 braces	40	9
Constructing nesting structures (shop)	4 structures	155	26
Total		9120	1280

Total expenditure charged to the program was:

Enrollee salary	\$4,575.24
Staff salary	2,108.00
Other costs	<u>415.75</u>
	\$7,098.99

Length of time shown to complete various tasks often appears excessive on paper. Many of the work sites are over one hour drive one way. This, plus discussing environmental awareness and safety topics can eat well into an eight-hour day.

3. Other Work Programs

Minnesota Youth Program

This program is administered and paid for by the Minnesota Department of Economic Security. Participants must be between the ages of 16 and 21 and are paid minimum wage (\$3.35 per hour). Two individuals were hired under this program this year. Most of their work consisted of removing old interior fences which are safety hazards to the visiting public. They removed 4.6 miles of old fence.

Green Thumb

The Green Thumb program operates under the Department of Labor. Any rural citizen who is 55 or older and has an income below the Department of Labor eligibility guidelines qualifies. They worked a maximum of 24 hours a week and were paid minimum wage.

Lawrence Nohner and William Schroeder were hired as laborers and placed with this office. Mr. Schroeder quit in late October due to health problems. They spent the majority of their time repairing fences.

4. Volunteer Program

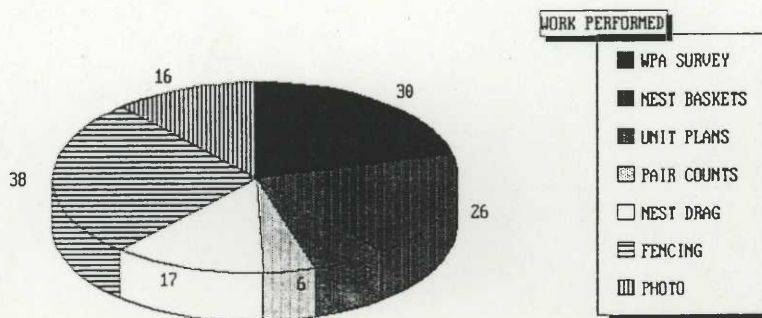


4/87 6d HAT

While volunteering Bonnie Olson also collected snail specimens for a parasitology study at St. Cloud State University.

Three volunteers donated 141 hours of service to the District during 1987. One volunteer, Bonita Olson, also collected snail specimens for a parasitology study during her volunteer period (see Section D.5). James Rorah volunteered his photography skills and previous Service experience after having been a YCC enrollee the year before. The work performed by the volunteers was as follows:

LITCHFIELD WMD-VOLUNTEER WORK IN HOURS



5. Funding

During FY87 the Station received \$236,800 for operations (Activity 1261), \$221,400 for maintenance (Activity 1262), \$7100 for YCC (Activity 1210), \$5000 for wildlife assistance (Activity 1230), and \$5000 for acquisition (Activity 3100) for a grand total of \$475,300. These funds were considerably above that planned for FY87 and resulted from a \$90,000 add-on to ARMM and Pay Act funds. Of this total \$444,300 was targeted for Litchfield and \$31,000 for the Windom District.

Major work activities in 1987 included nest cover establishment, wetland restoration, building site cleanup, biological surveys (breeding pairs and nest success), acquisition, weed control, and Farm Bill activities.

The following table shows funding allocations for Litchfield and Windom WMDs for the past nine fiscal years. Again as in FY87 we have not yet received funding targets for FY88. We are led to believe they will approximate those of FY87 with any decreases in Refuge Operations and Maintenance offset by increases in Wildlife Assistance for Farm Bill work.

LITCHFIELD WMD FUNDS IN \$000

YEAR	1210	1230	1260	3100	BLRP	ARMM	RPRP	TOTAL----- FUNDS	TOTAL FTE
FY79			177.7	6.0	334.8			518.5	6.72
FY80			245.0	10.0	166.0			421.0	10.93
FY81			398.0	10.0	56.6			464.6	9.74
FY82			309.5	6.7				316.2	7.25
FY83	10.6		330.5	5.0				346.1	7.48
FY84	9.7		238.4	5.0		33.0		286.1	8.07
FY85	8.9		209.1	5.0		144.0		367.0	8.73
FY86	9.8		227.7	5.0		105.0	55.0	402.5	8.98
FY87	7.1	5.0	245.3	5.0		157.5	24.4	444.3	9.99
FY88	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

ACTIVITY 1260 INCLUDES ACTIVITIES 1210/1220/1240 FOR FY79-FY83

ACTIVITY 1260 INCLUDES ACTIVITIES 1261/1262 FOR FY87

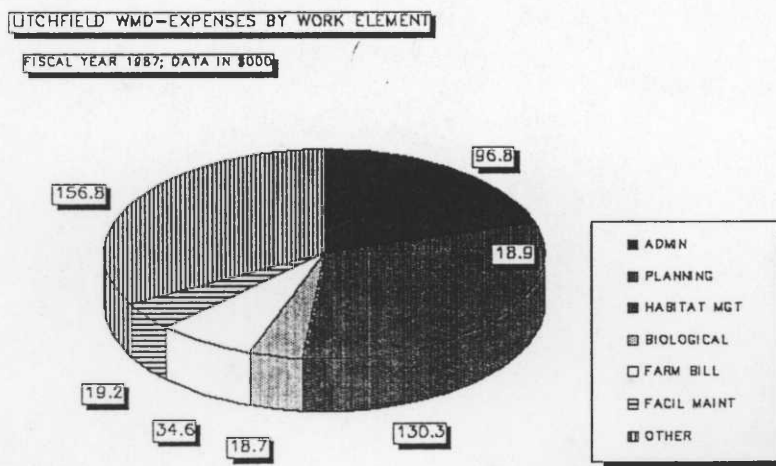
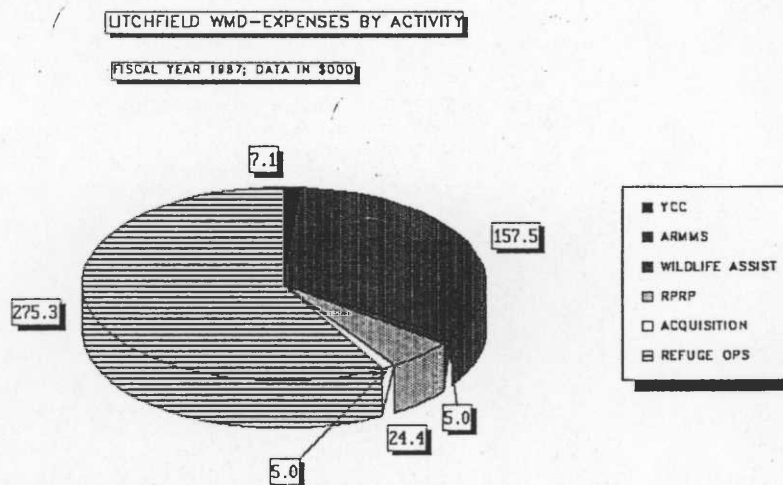
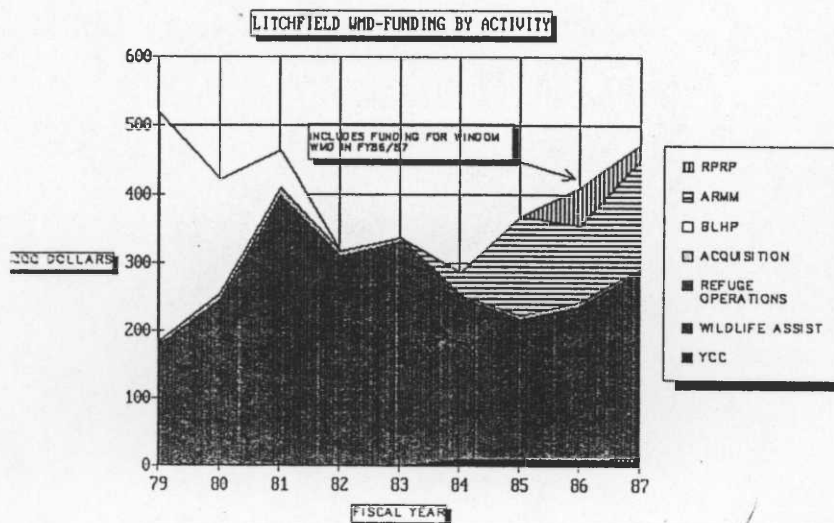
ACTIVITY 3100 INCLUDES ACTIVITY 3110 FOR FY79-FY83

WINDOM WMD FUNDS IN \$000

YEAR	1210	1230	1260	3100	BLRP	ARMM	RPRP	TOTAL----- FUNDS	TOTAL FTE
FY79								0.0	
FY80								0.0	
FY81								0.0	
FY82								0.0	
FY83								0.0	
FY84			-----TRANSFERRED TO UNION SLOUGH NWR-----					0.0	
FY85			-----ADMINISTERED BY UNION SLOUGH NWR-----					0.0	
FY86						6.0		6.0	
FY87			30.0					30.0	
FY88	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

FUNDS AVAILABLE TO LITCHFIELD WMD IN FY87: \$475.3

The following graphs show Station funds and expenses from several points of view:



Farm Bill duties will require more time and money in FY88. This represents a major shift from activities of previous fiscal years. It may also require reduction in traditional work areas to accomplish the Farm Bill activities within existing funds. Even so, we still plan to establish nest cover and perform essential weed control on Service upland. Wetland restoration will rank very high as a goal and will be carried out on both Service and private lands. Biological activities will include some breeding pair surveys and may include seasonal predator removal and nest success survey. We hope to identify high priority hunter access needs and plan for their future development. The acquisition program will continue to receive a lot of our attention to improve existing holdings and obtain key new starts.

6. Safety

Our Station is set up so that both the WMD and the Acquisition Office operate a joint safety program and share in the Safety Committee responsibilities. Membership on the Station Safety Committee is assigned for one year in advance. There are three members on the committee serving three consecutive months. One member is designated Chairman. One member of the outgoing committee becomes the Chairman of committee functions in the succeeding quarter. This provides continuity within the safety program. The Safety Committee makes a monthly inspection of buildings and grounds. OSHA-trained Maintenance Worker Trebesch is the permanent Safety & Health Inspector for the Station. He accompanies the Safety Committee on their monthly inspections.

Safety meetings were held monthly with topics identified in the Station Safety Plan. These were followed throughout the year and included safety in the home, vehicles, first aid, tools, water safety, natural disasters, hot weather hazards, hunting, electricity, fire safety, winter survival, alcohol and drugs.

The following safety films were shown during the year:

"Farm Implement Safety", "Tornados - A Spotter's Guide", "Electricity", "Room to Live", "Winter Driving", and "Winter Survival". A VCR tape "Home Safe Home" was also viewed. Outside speakers presented safety information at seven of the monthly meetings:

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Lloyd Achter (MN State Highway Patrol)	Seat belt usage
Lloyd Achter	Alcohol & driving
Eric Mathwig, Meeker County Sheriff's Office	Boating safety
Bill Nelson, Civil Defense Director	Tornado
identification	
Darlene Kotelnicki, Meeker County Public Health Nurse	Hot weather hazards
Allan Stenberg, Meeker Co-Op Light & Power	Electricity
Will Massingham, Litchfield Fire Department	Fire safety at home

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all pesticides used by the Station or on hand at the shop were reviewed by all field personnel expecting to possibly come in contact with them.

Brush was removed from the ditches at the driveway to the shop for better visibility when turning onto the main road.

A loose carpet seam in the office hallway was corrected by the landlord.

Open cisterns recently discovered were filled on Yarmon WPA (Kd-14), Evenson WPA (Kd-1), and New London WPA (Kd-26). See section I-2.

Eight wells were abandoned by certified well contractors. The work was accomplished following Minnesota rules, Water Well Construction Code 4725, for permanent abandonment. This will prevent surface contamination from getting directly into the groundwater aquifers.

Two of the wells were bored with openings over 30 inches in diameter and 40 feet deep. It is always a relief when this type of well is finally filled.

Wells were abandoned on Sioux Forks (Jk-10) (two), Uncle Matt's Lake (Kd-52), Miller Lake (Mk-10), Rosendale (Mk-7) (two), Baumann (Sr-35), and Mud Lake (Sr-21).

This was not one of the better years for this Station's accident record. Four accidents that occurred ended up to be relatively minor but each had the potential for being quite serious. Three were vehicle damage and one was a personal injury.

Temporary Biological Aid John Haffley had a motor vehicle accident while in a hurry to get back by quitting time and at the same time reading a map while driving. He was unaware of a "T" intersection ahead and by the time he saw it was unable to stop the vehicle. He attempted to turn the corner but the momentum of the vehicle carried it to the far road shoulder where the vehicle slowly rolled over. Both he and the passenger were wearing seat belts and no injury occurred. The 1979 Jeep sustained \$144 worth of damage.

An accident involving the 1982 Plymouth Horizon occurred which cost \$307 in repair work. The Wetland Manager placed the automatic transmission lever into park and went into a field to talk to the landowner. Apparently the lever was not completely in the park position. The vehicle began to slowly roll backwards down an inclined driveway. He returned to the car but only had time to open the door and get out of the way. The car headed for the ditch but the open door wedged in the slope stopping the vehicle and preventing it from rolling over.

Another property damage accident involved the 750 John Deere dozer and the 1980 one-ton Dodge pickup. Robert Woodsum, Equipment Operator detailed from Crab Orchard NWR to construct ditch plugs on Conservation Reserve Program lands, was operating the dozer. He backed up to the truck to refuel and shut the dozer off. He also lubricated the hydrostatic control handle because it had been causing problems. The lever was left in the reverse position. Upon starting the dozer it lurched backward and hit the pickup cracking the fiberglass left rear fender.

The personal injury occurred to Bob Schulz. A backhoe operated by Maintenance Worker Trebesch was being used to rehabilitate the outlet to Summit Lake on Summit Lake WPA (Kd-42). The backhoe bucket was being used to set a metal fence post on which the inlet tile was to be secured to. The post hit a rock and stopped. The operator moved the backhoe bucket over so he could see the post. At the same time Bob was moving and was struck in the face by the bucket requiring stitches to repair a cut lower lip.

There were 22,816 hours of work recorded and 123,857 miles driven during the year. This Station has 115,936 hours without a lost-time accident. The last lost-time accident occurred August 2, 1982 to a CETA worker. There has not been a lost-time accident to permanent personnel since the Station opened on October 1, 1978.

7. Technical Assistance

a. General

Technical assistance was given to the McLeod County Pheasants Forever Chapter Board of Directors in selecting land for purchase and developing a long-term program of enhancing pheasant populations and to the St. Paul Corps of Engineers - Enforcement Branch in establishing restoration criteria for illegally filled wetlands.

District staff also worked closely with the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) permanent staff and steering committees in Meeker, McLeod, and Kandiyohi Counties in ranking proposed enrollees, developing and seeding accepted enrollees land, and setting up and monitoring enforcement programs.

The RIM program was initiated in 1986 by the State Legislature to improve fish and wildlife populations in the State through a series of 10-year, 20-year, or perpetual easements on private land. It receives about \$10 million per year from various funding sources.

b. Professional Baseball - Minnesota Twins

Following his grand slam home run in Game Six of the World Series, Kent Hrbek of the Minnesota Twins came out to Ellsworth Township, Meeker County, to hunt waterfowl. Obviously, the hunting of waterfowl is contributory to solid baseball because the Minnesota Twins went on to win the 1987 World Series that evening in Game Seven.

Hrbek homers...hurries out here to hunt

A scant twelve hours after he brought 55,000 World Series fans in the Metrodome to their feet Saturday by sending a grand slam homer rocketing over the fence, Twins hero Kent Hrbek huddled in the predawn chill in a duck blind just south of Litchfield.

"Yes, I'd say he was a bit preoccupied," one of his hunting companions, Willard Piepenburg, said. "When the first flock came over he didn't shoot---he had forgotten to put shells in."

Hrbek, and a nephew of the Piepenburgs, were at the farm south of Litchfield along about 5:30 a.m. Sunday after leaving the metro area about 4 a.m.

Kent decided to come out to Litchfield to hunt early Sunday morning for several reasons. One is because he likes to hunt and another was to escape the ubiquitous media presence.

"When I came home Saturday night from the Dome, there were some television people waiting on the porch," Hrbek told the Piepenburgs.

Hrbek, who had breakfast with the Piepenburgs, left along about 11 a.m. since he had a bit of unfinished business to attend to later that day.

Hrbek's friendship with the Piepenburgs dates back some ten or twelve years.

Kent and a nephew of the

Piepenburgs grew up as neighbors in Bloomington and went to Bloomington Jefferson together. The heavy-hitting

first baseman started coming out here to hunt before he became a baseball star.

The Piepenburg boys, Dale,

Kevin, Doug and Curt, got to know him well and the family was invited to Kent's high school graduation.

He tries very hard to keep his hunting visits to Litchfield out of the public's eye and has been pretty successful.

"He was out here two or three weeks ago---we went to The Kitchen---he wore a pair of dark glasses and only one person recognized him," Willard Piepenburg says.

Willard describes Hrbek as "about as common and nice a guy as you could find---Sunday morning he took his shoes off before coming in the house and was wandering around here in stocking feet like the rest of us," Piepenburg says.

Hunting and fishing are favorite leisure time activities for Hrbek. "He lives on Lake Minnetonka and has a fish-house. During the winter that's where he is every day," Piepenburg says.

When the conversation turned to baseball Sunday morning over breakfast, Willard noted that Hrbek sounded a note of optimism for the future.

"I mentioned to him that it would probably be a long time before we saw World Series excitement again in our area, but his reply was 'don't be too sure---we just might win this thing again next year'."

c. Farm Bill

There is no doubt that at the Litchfield WMD 1987 will forever be known as the Year of the Farm Bill. Numerous Farm Bill related meetings, phone calls, reports, mailings, and consultations occurred as this program was elevated to prime importance.

The technical assistance aspects of our Farm Bill efforts were primarily involved with wetland appeal referrals from Soil Conservation Service District offices. During the calendar year District staff made wetland/non-wetland determinations for 280 areas in ten counties. A breakdown of these appeals by county is given below.

<u>County</u>	<u>No. of Wetland Appeals</u>	<u>No. of Farms</u>
Brown	12	6
Faribault	7	5
Freeborn	11	6
Jackson	1	1
Kandiyohi	3	1
Meeker	20	4
Nicollet	61	28
Redwood	21	9
Renville	104	47
Stearns	<u>40</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	280	118

Other technical assistance given by the staff included:

Providing seeding and wetland restoration information to SCS Offices in Meeker, McLeod, Kandiyohi, LeSueur, Cottonwood, Jackson, Brown, Wright, Sibley, Freeborn, Faribault, Stearns, and Todd Counties

Truax drill loans to Kandiyohi, Sibley, McLeod, LeSueur, and Meeker Counties

Making recommendations to ASCS committees in Stearns and Meeker Counties regarding "commenced" appeals on wetland drainage cases

And, presentations to Conservation Reserve enrollees on small wetland values and restorations in Meeker, Brown, McLeod, Kandiyohi, and LeSueur Counties

8. OtherSpecial Use Permits

Thirty Special Use Permits were issued during 1987. Twelve were issued for rent of cropland or seedbed preparation and are discussed in Sections F.4 and F.5. Information concerning the remaining permits is given below:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Permittee</u>	<u>SUP No.</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Ct-2	Bruce Carpenter	87-26645	ROW tile outlet
Kd-26	Mike Scheine	87-26652	Cedar removal
Kd-16	Barry Carlson	87-26653	Cedar removal
Fr-3	Freeborn Electric	87-26654	Brush powerline
Sr-12	Minnesota DNR	87-26656	Walleye rearing
WPAs/Stearns Co.	Pheasants Forever	87-26659	Place feeder cribs
Sr-35	Pheasants Forever	87-26660	Wildlife planting
Sr-28	David Piere	87-26662	Use of co-owned wooden shed
Kd-10	Minnesota DNR	87-26663	Place feeder cribs
Sr-7,20,26	Pheasants Forever	87-26666	Wildlife plantings
Sr-28	Raymond Township	87-26667	Bridge improvement
Kd-17,24	Minnesota DNR	87-26669	Walleye rearing
All Meeker County WPAs	Soil Conservation Service	87-26670	Soil tests
Kd-33	Kandiyohi County	87-26672	Road improvements
Mk-7	Jay Piepenberg	87-26673	Remove debris
Mk-7	Dave Lindberg	87-26674	Remove debris
Kd-48	Ken Slinden	87-26675	Mow firebreak
Many	Christina Harrison	87-26676	Archaeological tests

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT1. General

Historically, the District laid in the bluestem, switchgrass, and Indiangrass prairie with small scattered areas of oak savannah located along the northern and eastern fringes. Scattered throughout the entire District were numerous wetlands that varied greatly in size, shape, depth, permanency, and density. Timewise we are told that it took some 10,000 years for this diverse and complex ecosystem to develop. So-called "modern civilized man" has been allowed and often encouraged to all but destroy this ecosystem in less than 100 years or one-hundredth of the time it took to develop.

An unknown author wrote the following short essay on how he felt the Earth would be treated if it were only a few feet in diameter:

"If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would walk around it, marveling of its big pools of water, its little pools and the water flowing between the pools. People would marvel of the bumps on it and the holes in it, and they would marvel of the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball and the creatures in the water. The people would declare it as sacred because it was the only one and they would protect it so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder known and people would come to pray to it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty and to wonder how it could be. People would love it and defend it with their lives because they would somehow know that their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it. If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter."

With the passing of the 1985 Farm Bill more and more people are beginning to see that the Earth is really only a few feet in diameter and the natural resources that it has need to be conserved and preserved. In 1987 the response to the vast array of land retirement programs was nothing but fantastic! These programs had an application rate two to seven times higher than their funded level could support.



11/4/87

5b

RAS

There are some who think the Earth
is only a few feet in diameter and then...



11/4/87

5b

RAS

there are those that do not. Hopefully, with the passing of the 1985 Farm Bill and cross-compliance, the "those" will become fewer.

The Service's Wildlife Management Agreements (WMA) on Conservation Reserve Program lands provided a new and first-time opportunity for habitat management practices to be applied on private lands by the Service. For a mere \$5 per acre per year vast new doors for the Service have been opened that were either not there or not open before. Through the WMAs we met County Commissioners, township supervisors, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, housewives, farmers, and other landowners, often in the field on a one-on-one basis, to discuss the values of conservation and habitat management. It has given us the chance to discuss the real value of wetlands not only for wildlife but also their importance for flood storage, nutrient and sediment trapping and groundwater recharging. Yes, it has given us the chance to show that the Earth is really only a few feet in diameter.

2. Wetlands

Wetlands throughout the District received little nor no spring runoff as a result of the abnormally dry winter of 1986-87. Few, if any, Type I's filled during 1987 as a result of the drought conditions. Many of the wetlands that experienced record high water levels in 1986 as a result of the previous five years of record precipitation went dry or nearly dry by late fall as the result of record high temperatures and lack of precipitation received during the growing season of 1987.



11/5/87

4c

RAS

History in the making! This dike restores the first wetland on FmHA inventory lands in Region 3. A new era for the Fish & Wildlife Service.

Although the drought conditions were disheartening to see, the dry conditions helped make 1987 a banner year for the restoration of drained or partially drained wetlands. Wetland habitat values were restored or improved on 119 basins which were located on four WPAs, 18 lands having CRP-WMA leases, three lands having free leases, and one FmHA inventory lands. The following table displays the land category, type of construction used to restore the wetland habitat value, and the number of basins restored.

1987 - Wetland Restoration Activities

<u>Land Type</u>	<u>Restoration Method</u>			<u>No. Basins Restored</u>
	<u>Dike/ Plug</u>	<u>Tile Break</u>	<u>Outlet Improved</u>	
WPAs				
Arctander	27			27
Raymond	10			9
Spring Hill			1	1
Summit Lake			1	1
Wildlife Management Lease				
Thomas Block	18	1		19
Wayne Block	4	2		7
James Bosch	3	2		3
Wayne Hagen	1			1
Ralph Hall	1	2		6
Odell Jacobson		1		1
Earl Larson	2			2
Wayne Larson	2			2
Robert Nelson		2		2
Arnold Olson	3	1		3
William Tauton	4			4
James Baumann	4	2		3
Marle Gaarder	1			1
Charles Lankey	3			3
Dan Malinski	1			1
Patricia Piepenberg	2			2
Linda Bauer	3			3
Vicki McCann	1			1
Wildlife Free Lease				
James Bosch	1			1
Wayne Block	1			1
Margaret Huhn	1			1
FmHA Inventory Land				
Wilfred Crusoe	14			14
Total	107	13	2	119



9/16/87

4c

RAS

With the tons of reports, regulations, and other paperwork one has to endure, it does one's body and soul a world of good to run a dozer through a tile line like this one that had been draining a 5-acre+ wetland.

Those wetlands altered by subsurface tile drains were restored by breaking and removing 20 to 30 feet of the tile line. Treated plywood was placed over the exposed ends of the tile line before the area was backfilled and compacted. Steel fence posts were used above and below ground to mark the location of the tile line breaks.

The outlet to the main wetland on Summit Lake WPA (Kd-42) had become non-functional. It had been constructed prior to the Service acquiring the land. In 1985 water level of the main wetland had reached a point where the township road along the south side of the wetland and adjoining private farmland were being flooded. A Special Use Permit (86-26609 - see 1986 Annual Narrative) was issued to the township board to re-open the outlet. Water conditions prevented the outlet from being properly shaped and set until 1987. After consultations with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) - Division of Water, the outlet elevation was set. The area around the outlet was shaped and rock rip-rap was installed to prevent erosion.

The main wetland on Spring Hill WPA (Sr-25) was drained in 1985 as a result of construction of a private ditch along the south boundary of the unit. After negotiation with neighboring landowners and consultations with DNR - Division of Water, a 36-inch diameter outlet culvert was installed in the dike between the wetland and the private ditch. The culvert washed out in the fall of 1986. The culvert was reset in 1987. The inlet area was reshaped and rip-rap and filter fabric was installed.



9/18/87

4a

RAS

The dry conditions during 1987 allowed for the rehabilitation of the Watonwan WPA water control structure. Water had eroded around both ends making it non-functional.

The Watonwan River (Ct-4) water control structure was rehabilitated. It had washed out shortly after being closed in 1982. Water had eroded the soil away from both ends of the sheet piling weir. To rehabilitate the structure 15 feet of piling was added to each of the ends of the existing structure. Clay was backfilled along both sides of the new piling and armored with rock rip-rap. In addition, rocks were placed along the downstream edge of the weir to prevent any additional tipping.



9/20/87

4b

RAS

After battling two years with high water, the drought of 1987 allowed for the drawdown of the controlled wetland on the Weber WPA (Kd-6).

The drawdown of the controlled wetland on the Weber WPA (Kd-6) was completed. An excellent green-up of the exposed mudflats occurred in late summer. Attempts had been made to draw the wetland down in 1985 and 1986 however, inflows were such that it was not completed in either of the prior years. The drawdown allowed for the structure to be scraped and repainted correcting the corrosion problem.

It was the first year in several years that no high water complaints were received from neighbors of the Burbank WPA (Kd-20). A temporary spillway was cut into the structure in 1985 to lower the water levels. Ducks Unlimited had scheduled to rehabilitate the structure in 1987. However, because of other priorities it was not completed.

Topographic surveys were completed on Arctander WPA (Kd-21) and as part of land negotiation in Sections 23 and 24 of Greenleaf Township, Meeker County. The topographic work is the first step in plan development for water control structures on each area.

Project proposal was completed and forwarded to Ducks Unlimited for wetland restoration on St. Martin WPA (Sr-7).

3. Forests

The Stearns County Pheasants Forever Chapter planted approximately one acre of trees on three sites: St. Martin (Sr-7), Baumann (Sr-35), and Oak (Sr-26) WPAs. The plantings were made on the inside of existing shelterbelts to improve the ability of existing trees to provide cover and food for resident wildlife that use the areas.

This is the second, third, and fourth plantings of this type made by the group. The first site on Ashley WPA (Sr-22) has received excellent care. Many hours have been spent hand hoeing the weeds from within the tree rows on this site.

4. Cropland

A total of 1226.7 acres were farmed in 1987. Of these, 54.4 acres were done through four Cooperative Agreements (CA). The remaining 1172.3 acres were farmed on a cash-rent basis through the use of 22 Special Use Permits (SUP).

The following table displays the SUP/CA issued in 1987 for the farming program:

Farming - Litchfield WMD - Special Use Permits/Cooperative Agreements

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Crop</u>	<u>Cost/Acre</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Cooperator</u>
Iowa (Jk-6)	corn	0 <u>1</u> /	30	0	David Dean
Sioux Valley (Jk-7)	corn	0 <u>2</u> /	10	0	David Dean
Holy Trinity (Jk-4)	corn	0 <u>2</u> /	2.4	0	Joe VanCura
Swan Lake (Kd-3)	soybeans	20	18	360	Clifford Behr
Yarmon (Kd-14)	soybeans	5	6	30	Russell Klint
Litch/Two Island (Kd-10)	soybeans	5	20	100	Richard & Robert Hanson
Litch/Two Island (Kd-10)	corn	20	255	5100	Richard & Robert Hanson
Litch/Two Island	corn	10	78	780	Donald Boll
Uncle Matt's Lake (Kd-52)	corn/ soybeans	20	101	2020	Allen Hentges
Litch/Two Island	corn	25	60	1500	Harvey Uken
Litch/Two Island	oats	0 <u>3</u> /	32	0	Norling Farms
Tyrone Flats (Mk-8)	corn	0 <u>4</u> /	8	0	George Ruhland
Rosendale (Mk-7)	corn/ soybeans	35	33.5	1169	Dave Macik
Tyrone Flats (Mk-8)	corn/oats	8	62.3	758.40	Gordon Lyrek
Miller Lake (Mk-10)	soybeans	15	71	1065	Frances Rosenquist
Rosendale (Mk-7)	corn	30	60.6	1818	Dale Pearson
Rosendale (Mk-7)	corn/ soybeans	40	34	360	John Nelson
Tyrone Flats (Mk-8)	soybeans	7.50	44.1	330	Phyllis Holtz
Casey Lake (Mk-2)	corn	5	11	55	Harlan Ratike
Barber Lake (ML-1)	soybeans	15	51.9	778.50	Wallace Alvin
Ashley (Sr-22)	corn	30	62	1860	Gene Gettel
Behnen (Sr-23)	corn	20	10	200	Tom Uphus
Baumann (Sr-35)	corn	20	116	2320	James Baumann
Baumann (Sr-35)	corn	10	28.9	289	Cyril Spanier
Twin Lake (Sr-15)	corn	0 <u>4</u> /	7	0	Gertrude Wielenberg
GeRoy (Td-1)	corn	5	14	70	Merle Faber
Total			1226.7	\$20,962.90	

1/ CA - Cooperator agreed to control noxious weeds on the entire unit

2/ CA - Cooperator agreed to leave one-third of crop standing for resident wildlife

3/ CA - Cooperator agreed to prepare seedbed, provide seed, and seed area to cool season grasses

4/ SUP - Special Use Permits is a multi-year agreement whereby cooperator agreed to leave one-third of the crop standing for resident wildlife the first two years and either pay cash rent the last year of the agreement or prepare the seedbed and seed the area to grass

The farming program is being used to assist in the preparation of the desired seedbed for the establishment of both warm and cool season grasses.

Lands are farmed for periods of one to three years depending upon the weed problems of individual tracts, the presence of herbicide carry-over in the soil that would affect the growth of desired grasses, the amount of funding received, and the amount of equipment and manpower that is available to properly seed the desired grasses.

Cash rental rates are based on rent for similar lands in the vicinity of the WPA. To determine these values, the agricultural community, ie., Agricultural Extension Service, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization & Conservation Service, University of Minnesota, and realtors were canvassed. In addition, other facts such as condition of land at time of renting, weed problems, size and shape of parcel, soil limitations, wetland interspersions, and special conditions that limit the permittee as to the crops grown, chemical that can be used, and tillage applications are taken into consideration in establishing the rental rates.

The rental rates for 1987 tended to follow the trend of the past two years with rates being reduced anywhere from 10 to 50 percent over the previous rate as a result of the overall weak farm economy and the increased amount of land that was being offered for rent.

5. Grasslands

Four hundred ninety-six (496) acres on 15 WPAs were seeded to grasses in 1987. The following table displays the units seeded, acreage seeded, seed mixture, and seeding rates used:

1987 Grass Seedings

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Acres Seeded</u>	<u>Seed Mixture</u>	<u>Rate PLS/ft</u>
Harder Lake (Ct-6)	9	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Watonwan River (Ct-4)	6	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Watonwan River (Ct-4)	5	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Two Island (Fr-2)	19	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Sioux Forks (Jk-10)	49	Switchgrass (SD-149)	20 (50%)
		Indiangrass (native Wisconsin)	10 (25%)
Arctander (Kd-21)	7.5	Sideoats (Trailway)	10 (25%)
		Sideoats (Killdeer)	40 (100%)
Arctander (Kd-21)	26.5	Switchgrass (SD-149)	16 (35%)
		Big Bluestem (native Big Stone)	6 (13%)
		Indiangrass (Holt)	6 (13%)
		Little Bluestem (Camper)	6 (13%)

		Sideoats (Killdeer)	6 (13%)
		Green Needle (native South Dakota)	6 (13%)
Florida Slough (Kd-7)	30	Switchgrass (SD-149)	14 (34%)
		Big Bluestem (native Big Stone)	5 (13%)
		Indiangrass (native Wisconsin)	8 (20%)
		Sideoats (Butte)	8 (20%)
	25	Little Bluestem (Camper)	5 (13%)
		Switchgrass (SD-149)	18 (45%)
		Indiangrass (native Wisconsin)	8 (20%)
		Little Bluestem (Camper)	8 (20%)
		Sideoats (Butte)	6 (15%)
Freese (Kd-4)	6	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Litch/Two Island (Kd-10)	67	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Raymond (Kd-50)	37	Switchgrass (SD-149)	24 (60%)
		Indiangrass (native Wisconsin)	8 (20%)
		Sideoats (Butte)	8 (20%)
Summit Lake (Kd-42)	6	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Hanson Lake (Mk-3)	7.8	Indiangrass (ND-444)	40 (100%)
Hanson Lake (Mk-3)	74.2	Switchgrass (SD-149)	32 (60%)
		Indiangrass (native Wisconsin)	8 (20%)
		Little Bluestem (Butte)	8 (20%)
Harvey (Mk-5)	9	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Behnen (Sr-23)	24	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)
Padua (Sr-28)	75	Switchgrass (SD-149)	26 (65%)
		Big Bluestem (native Big Stone)	4 (10%)
		Indiangrass (Holt)	10 (25%)
Pope (Sr-11)	13	Switchgrass (SD-149)	40 (100%)

Even with dry soil conditions during the planting and throughout most of the growing season, most stands were rowed out and showed good signs of development by mid-fall. The seedlings were mowed in late July to reduce the competition from annual grasses and broadleaf weeds. The Hanson Lake (Mk-3) seeding was mowed a second time since weather conditions did not permit the area to be sprayed with the chemical Roundup before seeding. The dry condition is thought to have caused the weeds to germinate very unevenly making the use of Roundup less effective than if it had been in past years.



12/17/87

3b

RAS

The ability of native grasses to stand erect and provide nesting cover is amazing. This mixed stand of switchgrass, big bluestem, and Indiangrass remains erect even when coated with a half inch of ice.

The 67-acre Litch/Two Island (Kd-10) seeding was done in late October as a dormant seeding. The soil temperatures in the area had dropped well below 50 (F) degrees. The area seeded lays between several wetlands and access is limited to when conditions permit one to drive through one of the wetlands.

Three areas were seeded as potential future seed sources. The Harvey WPA (Mk-5) Switchgrass (SD-149) stand was increased by nine acres. Sideoats grama grass (Killdeer) was seeded on 7.5 acres on Arctander WPA (Kd-21) and 7.8 acres of Indiangrass (ND-444) was seeded on Hanson Lake WPA (Mk-3). The Soil Conservation Service Plant Material Branch provided the ND-444 Indiangrass seed. They will be periodically evaluating the stand as to its adaptability to central Minnesota environmental conditions.

In 1987 the District was unable to purchase any big bluestem, little bluestem, and only limited quantities of Indiangrass of the desired varieties. This was the result of the increased demand for the grass seed because of the vast land retirement programs and the late date at which the Station received its annual funding. Because of this the Station is striving to become self-sufficient in being able to grow and harvest the necessary grass seed to carry out an annual seeding program of between 300 and 600 acres.

Approximately 2400 pounds of switchgrass (SD-149) was harvested from Harvey (Mk-5) and Lake Charlotte (Kd-45) WPAs. An additional 1100 pounds of a mixture of big bluestem/Indiangrass was harvested from Litchfield (Mk-1), Raymond (Kd-50), and Rosendale (Mk-7) WPAs. This seed was harvested with the 12-foot wide seed stripper that the Station purchased in 1987. The seed is presently being tested for purity and germination.



7/18/87

3h

RAS

District employs stripper! The purchase of a Flail Vac seed stripper is another step forward in making the District self-sufficient in obtaining the necessary grass seed for the establishment of dense nesting cover throughout the District.

The yield of switchgrass was down considerably from past years. The big bluestem/Indiangrass stand set seed but most did not fill out. It is thought that the hot dry weather that occurred when the plants were developing the seed may have been the cause.

6. Other Habitats

The weather permitted the trees and brush that was cut on one of the 11 natural islands contained within the large wetland on the Burbank WPA (Kd-20) to be stacked and burned early in 1987. The clearing operation is an attempt to provide additional secure nesting habitat which is lacking on the unit.

Regrowth in 1987 consisted of mainly grasses and broadleaf weeds. Further management decisions will be based on what type of plant community evolves over the next couple years. If this effort proves successful the remaining ten islands will receive similar treatment.

7. Grazing

The Litchfield WMD has not used grazing as a grassland management tool.

The present agricultural trend in the District is toward cash crops, corn and soybeans, and away from cattle operations. What cattle raisers there are, mainly dairy oriented, are not interested in short-term, high-intensity grazing programs that could be beneficial to the District's grassland habitat.

Two people approached the District requesting grazing rights in 1987. Both were non-farm rural horse owners with two to five head of stock. Both wanted grazing rights for the remainder of the growing season and were not interested in short-term grazing rights that may have been beneficial to the existing grassland habitat.

As the District continues to evaluate the grassland habitat management needs, if grazing is felt to be the best management tool and a cooperating farmer can be found, grazing will be used to improve the wildlife value of the grassland habitat.

8. Haying

Haying was not used as a grassland management tool in 1987. With the extreme dry conditions especially in the northern part of the District, a number of haying requests were received. During discussions with potential permittees concerning the haying request, it was found that they were only interested in cutting the good stands of grasses during early to mid-June, the height of the nesting season. Because of the detrimental effect to the nesting birds and the lack of benefit to the existing grass stand, the requests were denied. Several attempts were made to have poorer stands cut after July 15th that had weed problems but no one was interested in the hay. Most farms having cattle in the District are dairy oriented and they are only interested in high-quality hay for milk production.

A list of those requesting haying rights was maintained in the office. Had the Governor declared a "haying emergency" the list of names would have been used to conduct a limited haying program on District lands.

9. Fire Management

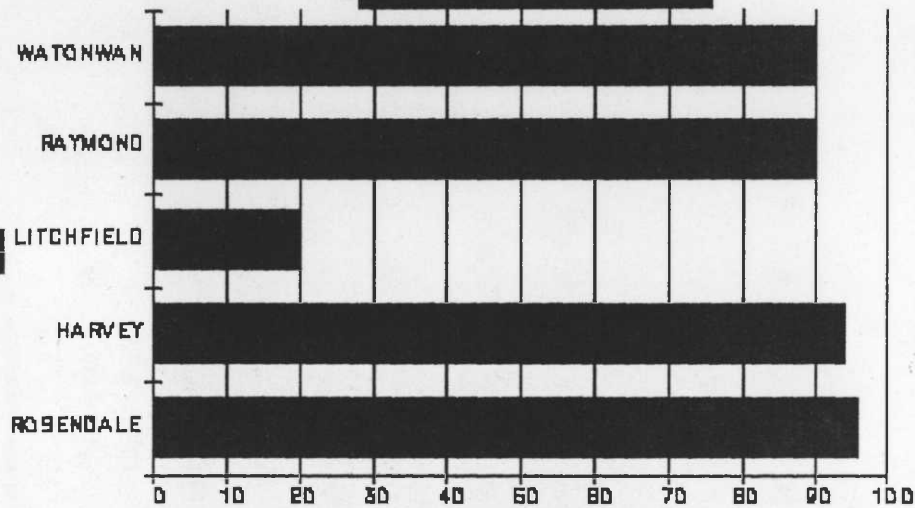
Prescribed Burning

The burning program at Litchfield is designed to: (1) rejuvenate grass cover (2) stimulate seed production for harvest and (3) reduce or eliminate tree invasion.

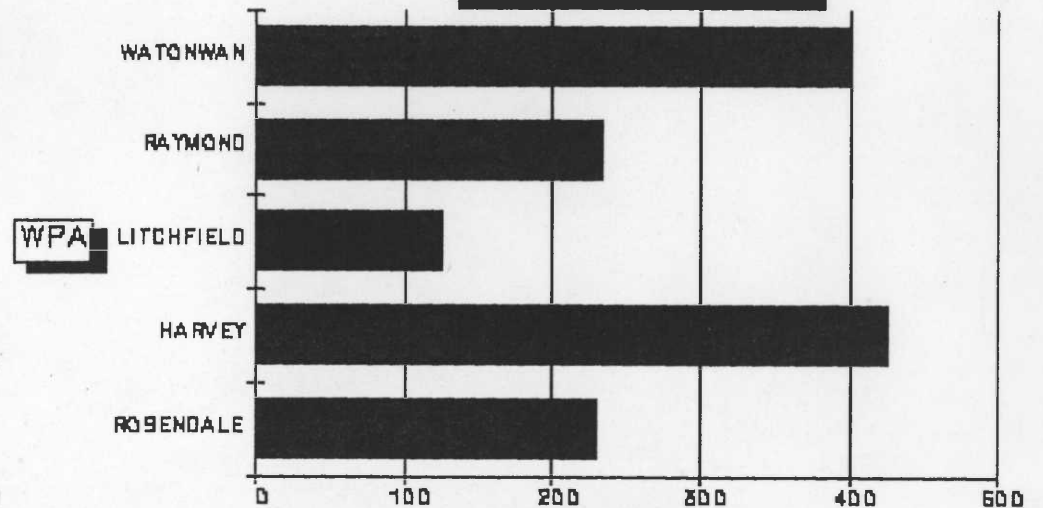
Burning most units in April has helped stem the tide of criticism received on the burning program. Prior to 1982 burning was conducted in late May and early June in order to suppress the cool season competition to warm season natives. The response was what was anticipated. It has since been observed that burning when the grasses are in a completely dormant stage will still meet present objectives, that is rejuvenation of cover. Warm season species respond quite favorably even with the corresponding cool season response and competition. The overall cover is improved.

<u>WPA</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Acres Native Prairie</u>	<u>Acres Seeded Natives</u>	<u>Acres Cool Season</u>	<u>Acres Marsh</u>	<u>Acres Trees</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Cost/ Method</u>	<u>Cost/ Acre</u>	<u>Weather</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Rosendale	4/24		68	11	3	14	96	\$230/FA	\$2.40	wind SE 10-20mph 63F, 47% rel hum	seed Mk-7 harvest & cleanup old building site
Harvey Mk-5	4/29		18	2	60		94	\$425FA	\$4.52	wind N 10-20mph 60F, 35% rel hum	seed harvest
Litchfield Mk-1	5/5		20				20	\$125FA	\$6.25	wind S 8-12mph 72F, 30% rel hum	seed harvest
Raymond Kd-50	5/7	12	78				90	\$234FA	\$2.60	wind NNE 5-15mph 70F, 30% rel hum	seed harvest
Totals	4 days	12	184	13	63	14	286	\$1014	\$3.38		
						Windom WMD					
Watonwan Ct-4	4/28	39		46	4	1	90	\$ 400FA	\$4.44	wind SSW 10-20mph 66F, 30% rel hum	Rejuven- ate grass- land & set back tree encroach- ment

WPA ACRES BURNED

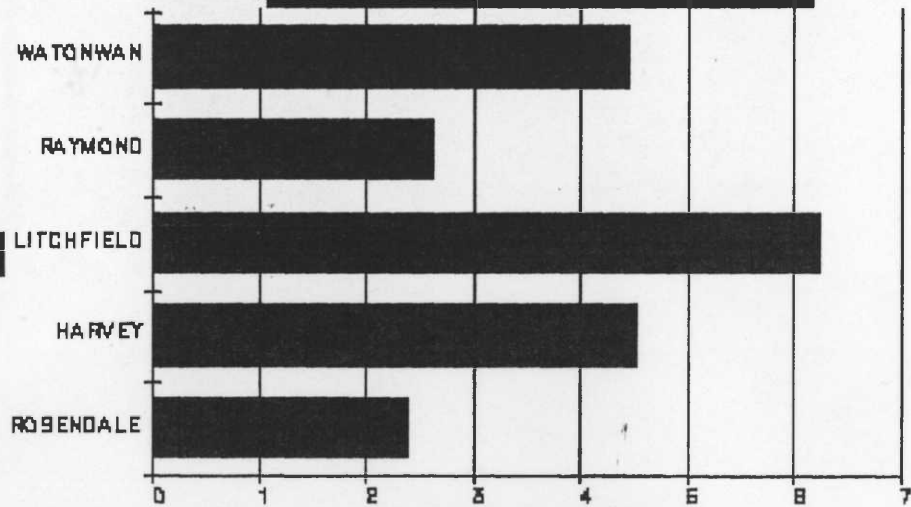


WPA BURNING COSTS



ACRES

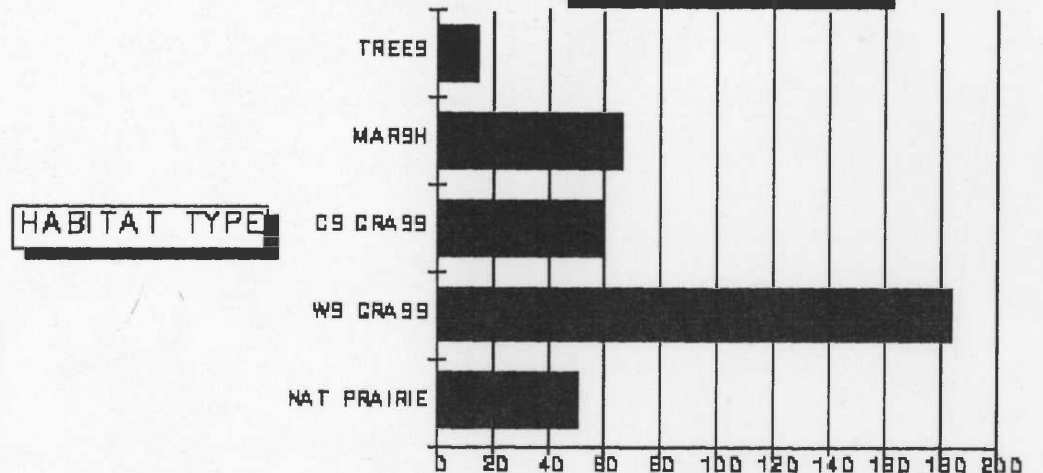
WPA BURNING COSTS PER ACRE



COST PER ACRE

ACRES

BURNED ACRES BY HABITAT TYPE



ACRES

This year's program was far less successful than we had hoped for. Dry conditions, late winter and early spring, coupled with lack of snow pack which allowed grasses to stand tall created conditions of high fire danger throughout most of the state. Burning bans were put on by the State in early April and were in force through April 23. As a result only five burns were conducted.

The Station received severe criticism in the local newspaper for the Watonwan burn. Most of the burning done in the past has been in the Litchfield District. Years of sending out information to the public and them seeing results of burning has lead to a general acceptance to the program. It appears the process will have to run its course in the Windom District also where prescribed burning is in its infancy. This was the first burn on the Watonwan River WPA. The criticism was fueled due to the burning of a tree planting put in by the Cottonwood County Game and Fish League in 1974.

The 1.5-acre tree planting was in the middle of grassland with no easy firebreak so the decision was made to allow the fire to burn through. The trees appeared to be mature enough to withstand the fire. Instead of the fire running through the trees as planned it became a crown fire which blackened the plot. The trees soon sprouted back at the base but the publicity damage had been done.

A local wildlife "expert" who lives next to the unit estimated that as many as 1000 duck eggs in the 85 acres of grassland were destroyed by fire. At that density we would also question the wisdom of burning. No duck nests were found in the burned area immediately after the fire.

The costs of the burns vary from unit to unit due to the size of the areas, travel time involved, and accessibility for the spray trucks. Entire WPAs are normally not burned in any one year in order to allow areas for nesting as well as being a positive public relations tool.

All employees participating in the burning activities this year took the step test and passed. They included Trebesch, Tuch, Miller, Kerschbaum, Schulz, Haffley, Lee, and Bruesewitz.

Wildfires

The dry spring plagued the local volunteer fire departments with grass fires. In Meeker County alone there were 21 grass fires in one three-day span. Many of the fires resulted from trash and debris burning. Arson was suspected in some but no one has been apprehended. WPAs also received considerable attention but most fires were put out before serious damage could occur. The Meeker WPA (Kd-29) was set afire on three different dates this year. The fires were lit at night and as a result no witnesses have been able to describe the vehicle or persons involved.

A wildfire started on the Raymond WPA (Kd-50) which is south of the road while prescribed burning efforts were going on on the north side of the road. It was not noticed in time to check the fire and keep it from spreading onto the neighbor's land. As a result it burned approximately 100 acres of corn stubble on private land. The Raymond Fire Department was called to put out the fire. The farmer asked to be reimbursed for the damage done to the corn stubble; however, at year's end has not submitted an SF-95. This was to be cover for his set-aside acres. As a result he had to seed the area down to cover. Regional Forester Cal Gale later investigated the area and could come up with no definite idea of how the fire originated. It is suspected that perhaps it was a case of arson but could not be proven.

Wildfires

<u>WPA</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Acres Burned</u>	<u>Suspected Cause</u>	<u>Suppression Costs (a)</u>
New London (Kd-26)	3/10	1	?	\$ 200
Costello (Sr-9)	3/12	13	Trash burning	0
Swan Lake (Kd-3)	4/4	27	Trash burning	0
Ella Lake (Kd-47)	4/5	1	Trash burning	0
Lovell Lake (Sr-3)	4/6	35	Trash burning	0
Weber (Kd-6)	4/6	12	?	270
Boot Lake (Jk-14)	4/8	4	?	256
Uncle Matts Lake	4/9	2	?	232.50
St. Martin (Sr-7)	4/?	1	?	0
Raymond (Kd-50)	5/7	118	Arson	595
Meeker (Kd-29)	5/9	1	Arson	190.50
Bjur (Kd-32)	5/9	2	Arson	175.50
Allen (Kd-17)	7/4	.1	Fireworks	200
Meeker (Kd-29)	9/29	.3	Arson	120
Meeker (Kd-29)	10/28	6	Arson	355
Lake Charlotte	10/28	20	Arson	500
Erickson (Kd-38)	10/28	1	Arson	200
Litch/Two Island	11/12	4	Debris burning	0
Total	18 fires	248.4		\$3,294.50

(a) fire department charges to Fish & Wildlife Service

10. Pest Control

Weeds

Weed control at this Station has two goals: be responsive to weed complaints and reduce weed competition in new seedings. If weed control is responsive to a problem, that is one less reason for township and county boards to not certify the purchase of fee tracts.

An agreement was once worked out whereby the County Agricultural Inspectors met with township officials to identify legitimate noxious weed problems on WPAs. The County Inspector then filled out a Form 41 "Cooperative Weed Control Program" with recommendations as to control and met with Service officials yearly to discuss the forms.

Only two counties continue this process. All WPAs in those two counties (Cottonwood and Jackson) were represented with a form whether or not there was a legitimate problem. They want to be covered if a problem should suddenly appear. The other counties are sitting back with a "let's wait and see" attitude. If a problem exists they will notify us and insist we take care of the problem as soon as possible. It is impossible to react with any positive results at that stage because the thistle are either in full bloom or starting to shed seeds. Mowing in the blossom stage does no more than set the seed production stage back. Mowing after the blossom stage tends to give an effect of winter in July with white fluff blowing all over. Also, mowing is a slow process meeting only a portion of the needs.

Control plans this year centered around historical problem areas. Money was available to have most areas sprayed by air. Ground application, although cheaper, results in nests being destroyed by truck tires. Many of the commercial rigs for rough terrain are three-wheelers with four-foot tire widths leaving little room for a nest to escape their path. The tall native grasses also pose a fire hazard in the presence of the hot exhaust systems of ground equipment. Because many of the units have scattered irregular patches, a helicopter is the best method of application by air.



6/26/87

3C

GRM

Documented evidence that Canada
thistle exists not only on Service
land.

Canada thistle is by far the most prevalent noxious weed on WPAs but the musk thistle is rapidly trying to take over that distinction in the Windom District. The second year plants were cut by hand.

Weed problems came on in a hurry this year. The early growing season plus the unseasonably hot weather resulted in thistles blooming approximately two weeks earlier than normal. Contract spraying by air was completed by June 18. A total of 662 acres were contracted in the Windom District and 1,047 acres in the Litchfield District.

Aerial Spraying Contracts
Litchfield District

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Cost/acre(a)</u>	<u>Acres sprayed</u>	<u>Total cost</u>
Scott's Helicopter, Kandiyohi LeSueur, MN		\$10.75	239	\$ 2,569.25
Scott's Helicopter	Todd	10.75	92	989.00
Teryjon Aviation, St. Peter, MN	Stearns	9.50	716	6,802.00
Total			1047	\$10,360.25

Windom District

Scott's Helicopter	Cottonwood	10.90	200	2,180.00
Scott's Helicopter	Jackson	10.15	436	4,425.40
Scott's Helicopter	Freeborn	18.65	26	484.90
Total			662	\$ 7,090.30

(a) includes cost of 2,4-D amine chemical at one pound AI/acre



9/3/87

3C

GRM

Disturbed areas such as pocket gopher mounds are a haven for noxious weed seeds to germinate and thrive.

Weed Control

County	Acres Treated w/Roundup	Acres Treated w/2,4-D	Acres Treated w/Tordon	Acres Cut	Total Acres Treated	No. WPAs Treated	Total Cost
Windom WMD (to establish warm season grasses)							
Cottonwood	12			37	49	2	\$ 538
Freeborn	19			19	38	1	654
Jackson	<u>40</u>			<u>69</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1347</u>

General Weed Control

Cottonwood		200		10	210	7	2234
Freeborn		26		1	27	2	485
Jackson		<u>442</u>		<u>140</u>	<u>582</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>5012</u>
Subtotal		668		151	819	21	\$ 7731
Total all weed control		668		276	1015	25	\$10,270

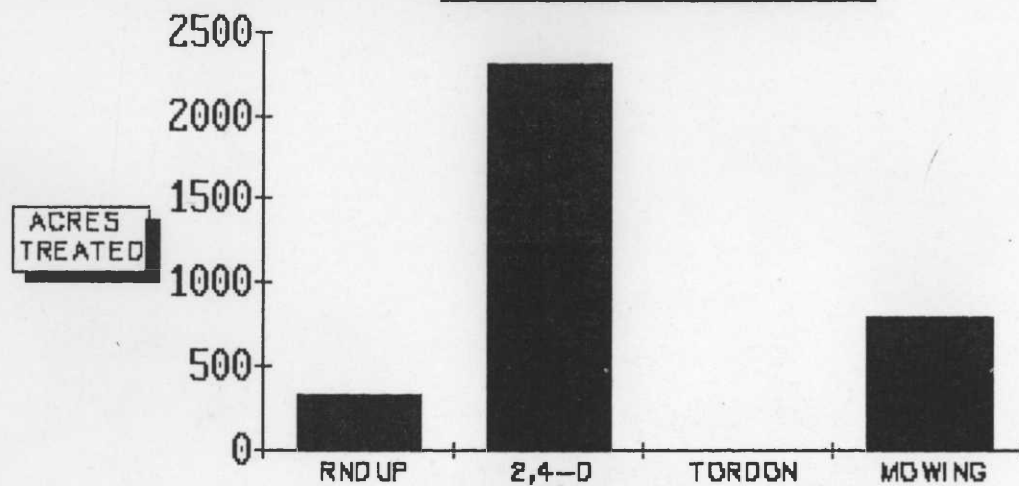
Litchfield WMD (to establish warm season grasses)

Kandiyohi	138	20		132	290	7	5284
Meeker	9			93	102	2	982
Stearns	<u>108</u>			<u>112</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3807</u>
Subtotal	255	<u>20</u>		337	612	12	\$10,073

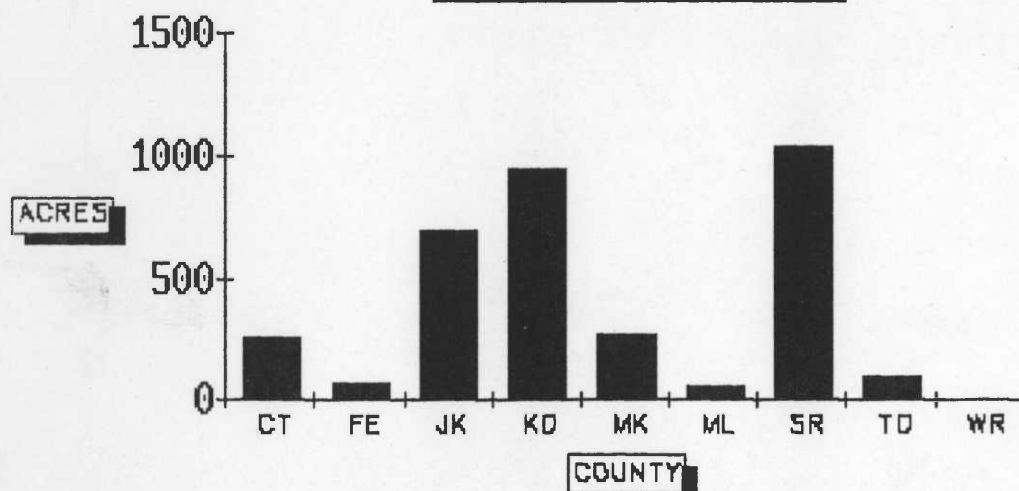
General Weed Control

Kandiyohi		612	1	39	652	32	5200
Meeker		133	1	30	164	8	1022
McLeod		62			62	2	364
Stearns		721		100	821	23	7706
Todd		92			92	4	989
Wright				<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>
Subtotal		1620	<u>2</u>	172	1794	70	\$15,288
Total all weed control	255	1640	2	509	2406	82	\$25,361

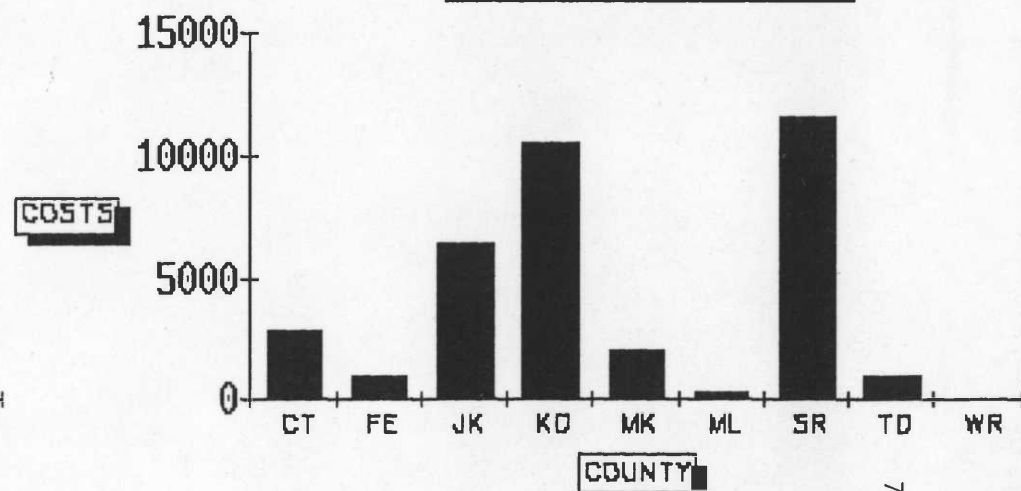
WEED CONTROL METHODS



COUNTY WEED CONTROL ACRES



COUNTY WEED CONTROL COSTS



There were no spray drift complaints from neighbors this year.

There is no known infestation of purple loosestrife on WPAs although it is found throughout the District and on a co-owned marsh, Goose Lake WPA (Fr-1). Plants found along a highway right-of-way were pulled. This weed was finally placed on Minnesota's Noxious Weed list this year. Local County Weed Inspectors are concerned how this will be enforced. The test for certification for applying pesticides to aquatic vegetation is not simple. They fear the average landowner will not pass it.

Leafy spurge is known to exist on Loon Lake (Jk-13) and Spirit Lake (Jk-11) in the Windom District. Patches on both units were hit with Tordon 22K or 2,4-D spray. The same herbicides were used on known spurge infestations on Lake Mary (Kd-34), Norway Lake (Kd-33), Lake Henry (Sr-6), and Hanson Lake (Mk-3) in the Litchfield District.

Naturally occurring marijuana plants were cut or pulled at the old building sites on Yarmon (Kd-14) and Cosmos (Mk-11). The recent acquisition to the west of Sweep (Kd-9) had some plants growing wild that required cutting. Cultivated plants were again found and pulled on Freese (Kd-4). (See Section H.17.)

The second form of weed control is intended to reduce weedy competition in cool season grass and warm season native grass seeddowns. Roundup was applied prior to some seedings of native grass to eliminate initial competition. Following the third-leaf stage of the native grass seedlings, 2,4-D or mowing was used if weeds had become a problem.

Trees

Tree invasion continues to be a problem. Recent years' efforts to control trees through fire, spray, and mechanical means has some units looking like grasslands again; however, there are still a number of WPAs that need additional work. This year put a big dent in the problem.

Two laborers were hired to cut down trees invading the grassland. Trees targeted were red cedar, boxelder, elm species and green ash too large to be set back by fire. Stumps of the deciduous trees were treated with Tordon RTU to prevent regrowth. Red cedar were cut on 221 acres on Carlson Lake (Kd-24), Sweep (Kd-9), Florida Slough (Kd-7), Dengerud (Kd-36), Weber (Kd-6), and Costello (Sr-9). An additional 535 acres of miscellaneous trees were cut on Burr Oak Lake (Kd-27), Sunburg (Kd-40), Randall (Kd-5), Brenner Lake (Kd-51), Summit Lake (Kd-42), Freese (Kd-4), Arctander (Kd-21), Colfax (Kd-25), Burbank (Kd-20), Allen (Kd-17), Swanson (Kd-11), Reynolds (Kd-22), DeGroot (Kd-12), Swan Lake (Kd-3), Hanson Lake (Mk-3), Harvey (Mk-5), Rosendale (Mk-7), and Watonwan River (Ct-4).

Cost of the tree cutting including labor, herbicide, equipment, supplies, and fuel totaled \$8,700 for the 756 acres.



8/5/87 3k GRM

A problem all too common in the District. The boxelder trees to the left have seeded down the grassland to the right - eliminating good nesting cover.



8/5/87 3k GRM

A major effort was made this year to eliminate the invasion of trees into the grasslands. Trees were cut on 756 acres of grasslands.

In addition, brush was cut along the road rights-of-way for .1 mile on Sioux Forks (Jk-10) and .3 miles of Sioux Valley (Jk-7) to eliminate snowdrift problems.

In 1986 Control Services, Inc., Marion, Iowa, was hired to apply Spike 40P to 10 acres of grassland on Allen WPA (Kd-17) to control invading trees. It appears to have killed the trees but also large areas of grass. A representative of Elanco Products was out to view the situation and agreed that the herbicide was apparently put on at too high a rate. He said not to be too concerned - within a couple years the grass will be back. We do not believe this will be the case and that thistle will arrive before the grasses do.



7/16/87 3k GRM

Grass kill from improper distribution of Spike 40P pellets by Control Services, Inc., in 1986 on Allen WPA (Kd-17).

To add to the trees invading the grasslands naturally, in early summer it was discovered that someone was helping that succession. Red cedar and spruce trees were found planted in the grassland on the southeast portion of Lake Henry WPA (Sr-6). This was an area where trees were not called for in the development plan. Due to the dry spring many of the trees were already dead. A half hour later the remaining live red cedar were beginning to die from root exposure. It appeared the spruce would die due to the drought.



6/25/87 15b GRM

Red cedar planted illegally by unknown person(s) on Lake Henry WPA (Sr-6) were pulled shortly after being discovered.

Beaver

Only one beaver complaint was received this year. Al Handzus, a neighbor to Sioux Forks (Jk-10) complained that a beaver dam on the WPA was flooding his cropland. David Deel, a local trapper, was hired for \$100. He caught one beaver and the local Conservation Officer blew the dam. A month later the neighbor called again on a tirade complaining that he was tired of us not doing anything and the water never went down. His son was then shown that there was two feet difference between water levels in the creek and water on his land. The problem was with his tile line.

11. Water Rights

Nothing to report.

12. Wilderness and Special Areas

Nothing to report.

13. WPA Easement Monitoring

The waterfowl management easement program in western Minnesota started in the early 1960s. Since then approximately 6500 wetland acres have been protected by easements in the Litchfield WMD. Purchasing easements is another way of preserving the wetlands which are needed for waterfowl habitat. The easement states that in exchange for a one-time payment, the landowner agrees not to drain, fill, level, or burn any of the naturally-occurring wetlands on his property.

All easement basins are usually aerially checked each fall. This year only 90% could be covered before snowfall because the enforcement staff was heavily involved in a criminal easement trial during October and November.

Five possible violations were noted and field checked but no violations were found.

The unchecked easements in southern Meeker and McLeod County will be checked as early as possible next spring.

County property records are checked each year to determine ownership of easement lands. As a courtesy, a new landowner is contacted by certified letter notifying him of the easement on his property. We believe the notification letters prevent many violations from occurring.

The only open case file on an easement violation within the District is Stearns County easement Sr-139X owned by Mr. Dennis Kampsen. During a vertical photography flight in April of 1985 the lead enforcement officer noticed that the basins on Sr-139X seemed exceptionally low. This easement was the site of a ditching violation in 1983 and 1984 but had been restored in May of 1984. A field check during 1985 revealed that during the restoration work, the owner had placed a tile line in the illegal ditch and completely covered over the inlet. Our inspections of the restoration work could not pick up the buried inlet until spring runoffs opened it and partially drained the wetlands. Because of Mr. Kampsen's attitude the case was forwarded to the U. S. Attorney's Office in June of 1985.

After two years of initiation, a criminal trial for Kampsen was held in front of the U. S. Magistrate in St. Paul on November 13 and 17, 1987. After extensive preparation by U. S. Attorney James Lacknor, Special Agent Kevin Adams, and Refuge Officer Rob Bruesewitz and two days of tense testimony and cross-examination, Mr. Kampsen was found guilty.

On the evening of December 9 Kampsen called the home of Refuge Officer Bruesewitz and threatened him and his family.

On December 10 Kampsen was contacted by his probation officer and his lawyer and informed that any further such calls or contacts would result in additional charges being filed against him.

A sentencing hearing on the initial easement drainage case is scheduled for January, 1988. We have asked that a condition of Kampsen's probation be that he limit his contacts with Refuge Officer Bruesewitz to business matters at the office and has no contact whatsoever with the Bruesewitz Family.

G. WILDLIFE

1. Wildlife Diversity

Wildlife diversity is a consideration in planning, development, and management of WPAs. Established woodlots are left intact. As a rule, no firewood permits are issued unless the downed trees become a hazard. Grasslands are managed to provide cover for a great variety of wildlife.

Wildlife and facilities inventories provide valuable wildlife diversity information. Unit inventories are done on a yearly basis and shuffled each year so that they can be checked during different seasons.



This peregrine falcon was seen west of the City of Litchfield with a blue-winged teal it had killed.



2. Endangered and/or Threatened Species

The endangered peregrine falcon appears to be making a slow comeback into central Minnesota. On March 20 one was seen in Kandiyohi County a half mile east of a WPA. In August our volunteer photographer spotted another one west of Litchfield with a freshly killed blue-winged teal.

Bald eagles, classified as threatened in Minnesota, do utilize some of the WPAs. On March 17 a bald eagle was seen in Kandiyohi County 1 1/2 miles from a WPA.

3. Waterfowl

The winter of 1986-87 proved to be extremely mild with spring arriving nearly three weeks earlier than usual. First sightings of waterfowl were recorded as follows:

Spring Waterfowl Migration 1987

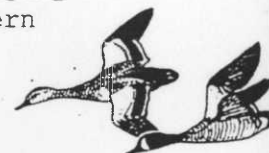
<u>Species</u>	<u>Date</u>
Canada goose	2/17
Mallard	2/17
Blue-winged teal	2/24
Canvasback	2/24
Ruddy duck	2/24
Tundra swan	2/28
Snow goose	3/1
Common merganser	3/3
Goldeneye	3/4
Lesser scaup	3/4
Ring-neck duck	3/4
White-fronted goose	3/5
Northern shoveler	3/8
Bufflehead	3/10
Wood duck	3/12
American coot	3/22
Widgeon	3/23
Redhead	3/23
Green-winged teal	4/7
Black duck	*
Pintail	*
Greater scaup	*
Hooded merganser	*
Gadwall	*

* no date

A rare sighting of eight black-bellied whistling ducks was confirmed in Meeker County on August 4. Finding these ducks this far north is highly unusual since the northern extent of their range is generally southern Texas.

Breeding Pair Survey

Quarter-section waterfowl breeding pair counts were conducted between April 28-29 in the Windom District and May 5-12 in the Litchfield District. Six WPAs in Windom and 17 WPAs plus easements were surveyed in the Litchfield District in 1987. Ashley WPA (Sr-22) in Stearns County was also surveyed. This unit has a good complex of 110 wetlands scattered over 579 acres.



Surveyed wetlands in the Windom District totaled 157.6 wetland basin acres but because of the lack of snowmelt and spring rains, actual wet acres was only 90.7. (See Section B.)

Survey results indicated 126 pairs per square mile (ducks and geese only), an increase of 4.4% over the 1986 survey. The following table shows pairs per square mile for selected species, total dabblers and divers, and the percent change over 1986:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Pairs/mi2</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Mallard	40	+122.0%
Blue-winged teal	36	- 45.8%
Canada goose	15	- 8.4%
American coot	1	- 76.6%
Total dabblers	80	- 13.8%
Total divers	30	+164.1%

The large increase in total diver pairs over the 1986 survey is likely due to the addition of Type Vs.

Fee areas - Litchfield District

Surveyed wetlands in the Litchfield District totaled 625.8 wetland basin acres but because of the lack of snowmelt and spring rains, actual wet acres was only 448.5 (See Section B.) Survey results indicated 147 pairs/mi2 (ducks and geese only), an increase of 14.8% over the 1986 survey. The following table shows pairs/mi2 for selected species, total dabblers and divers, and the percent change over 1986.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Pairs/mi2</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Mallard	49	+75.7%
Blue-winged teal	74	+ 6.4%
Canada goose	3	+58.9%
American coot	5	-70.8%
Total dabblers	139	+26.5%
Total divers	5	-47.2%

Fee areas - Windom District

This was the second year of the breeding pair survey in the Windom District. In 1986 no Type V wetlands were sampled in the survey, therefore, 80 acres of Boot Lake WPA, which includes 20 acres wetlands to the survey sample.

Easement areas - Litchfield District

The easement breeding pair survey for 1987 was conducted on 28 easement tracts in conjunction with the fee area survey. These 28 tracts total 2449.74 acres of which 507.5 are wetland basin acres. Easement wetland conditions were similar to that found on the fee areas.

Results from the 1987 survey indicated 42 pairs/mi², an increase of 3.7% over the 1986 survey. This compares with 147 pairs/mi² found on WPAs this year. The following table shows pairs/mi² for selected species, total dabblers and divers, and the percent change over 1986.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Pairs/mi²</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Mallard	12	-23.4%
Blue-winged teal	14	-16.8%
Canada goose	1	+66.7%
American coot	1	-54.5%
Total dabblers	39	- 0.8%
Total divers	1	+ 0.5%

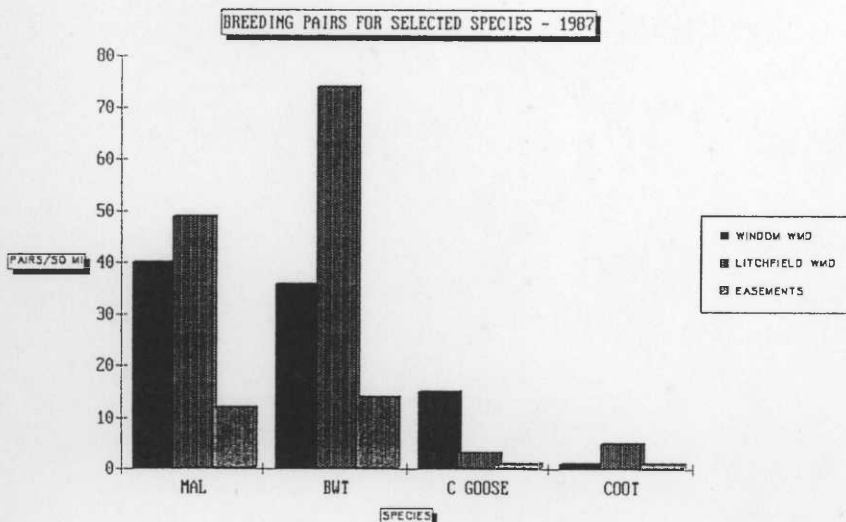
Easement areas - Windom District

No easements were sampled in this District.

Ashley WPA (Sr-22)

The breeding pair survey on Ashley WPA indicated 132 pairs/mi², an increase of 38% over 1986. This increase is consistent with other findings in the District and is comparable to the 147 pairs/mi² found on fee areas.

Most wetlands on Ashley were at or near 100% full although because of the unusual winter, most Type Is were dry.

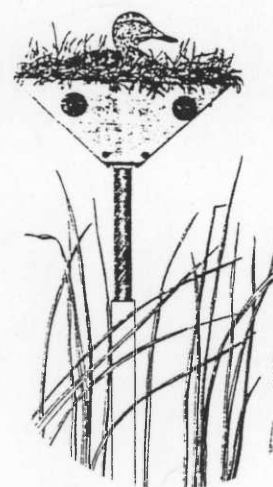


Waterfowl Production

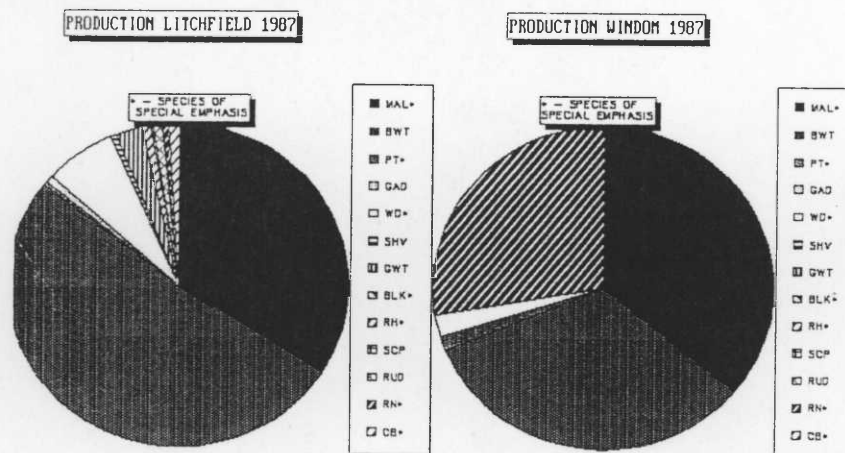
Total waterfowl production on fee areas in 1987 (excluding American coot and Canada geese) was estimated to be 6880 birds in the Litchfield District or .29 birds/acre and 1060 birds in the Windom District or .25 birds/acre. The production objective for both Districts is one duck/acre.

1987 Duck Production Estimate, Litchfield WMD

<u>Species</u>	<u>Litchfield District</u>	<u>Windom District</u>
Mallard*	2346	381
Blue-winged teal	3549	349
Pintail*	21	12
Gadwall	58	
Wood duck*	450	25
Shoveler	48	
Green-winged teal	168	
Black duck		
Widgeon		
Redhead*	64	
Lesser scaup	16	
Ruddy duck	48	
Ring-necked duck*	48	293
Canvasback*	64	
Total	6880	1060



*NSSE - National Species of Special Emphasis



The following formula was used to calculate the 1987 production estimates:

Breeding pairs x observed nest success (.284 in Litchfield and .312 in Windom) x 5 fledged young per brood).

The Minnesota duck and goose hunting season opened on October 3 (See Section H.8) but because of statewide drought conditions, hunters were hard pressed to find marshes with adequate water.

The 198 mallard nesting baskets provided by Ducks Unlimited in 1986 were checked in June for usage. The Complex recommendations were to check 25% and extrapolate the number of successful nests from the results. We decided instead that knowing the results from all baskets was valuable information so we had our temporary summer help check all the nest baskets. We found only two successful nests, on Lake Charlotte (Kd-45) and Greenleaf (Mk-4) WPAs.



One of two successful nest baskets. Sampling with such a small number of baskets, would likely result in false estimates.

4. Marsh and Water Birds

The great blue heron rookery on Lovell Lake WPA (Sr-3) in Stearns County was censused on May 21 and 22. A total of 411 active nests were observed, an increase of 22% over 1986. This increase is not necessarily indicative of steady growth in the population because large fluctuations from year to year are common in colonial nesting birds.

On January 10 a sora rail was seen in northern Kandiyohi County. Because of the mild winter this bird probably did not leave the area during fall migration.

Two young common loons were seen on Burbank WPA (Kd-20) on June 4 and presumably hatched there.

5. Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns, and Allied Species

Common snipe, killdeer, ring-billed gulls and Forsters terns are frequent visitors to District WPAs.





6. Raptors

Many American kestrels that normally migrate in the fall were seen over wintering in the District because of the mild winter.

Great horned owls, red-tailed hawks, American kestrels and marsh hawks are all common nesters on the District's WPAs.

7. Other Migratory Birds

Some of the more common birds regularly observed on WPAs in our District include meadowlarks, tree sparrows, yellow-rumped warblers, mourning doves, tree swallows, yellow-headed blackbirds, and marsh wrens.

The following table shows the date and county of first sightings for many of the birds common to the Litchfield District.

First Sightings of Common Birds - 1987

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>County</u>
Sora rail	January 10	Kandiyohi
American robin	February 5	Meeker
Mourning dove	February 5	Meeker
Red-winged blackbird	January 17	Jackson
Tree swallow	March 7	Meeker
Killdeer	March 7	Meeker
Meadowlark	March 7	Meeker
Common loon	March 10	Meeker
Northern Harrier	March 10	Stearns
Sharpshinned hawk	March 11	Meeker
Red-tailed hawk	March 11	Meeker
Bald eagle	March 17	Kandiyohi
Ring-billed gull	March 20	Meeker
Great blue heron	March 21	Stearns
Pied-billed grebe	March 25	Meeker
Common egret	March 26	Meeker
Common snipe	March 31	Kandiyohi
Lesser yellowlegs	April 7	Kandiyohi
American woodcock	April 10	Meeker
Red-necked grebe	April 10	Meeker
Double-crested cormorant	April 17	Kandiyohi
Peregrin falcon	April 20	Kandiyohi
Franklin's gull	April 21	Meeker
Brown thrasher	April 27	Meeker
Caspian tern	April 30	Cottonwood
Ferruginous hawk	May 4	Kandiyohi
Green heron	May 5	Kandiyohi
Marbled godwit	June 8	Kandiyohi





8. Game Mammals

The mild winter and early spring appear to have helped the white-tailed deer population make a slight comeback over last year. According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, August roadside survey the number of animals seen increased 30% over 1986. The population in general is more healthy because of the mild winter.

Red and gray fox populations have reportedly declined 39% from 1986. This, hopefully, will have a positive effect on duck production next year.

Reports from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources show good increases in cottontail rabbits and jackrabbits. The cottontail index increased 69% and the jackrabbit index was up 60% from 1986.

Gray and fox squirrel numbers declined 8% this year although this is a much smaller decrease than last year.

Moose sightings occur every few years in the Litchfield District and 1987 was one of those years. In early October several people in Meeker County reported seeing a moose with a broken antler wandering the countryside. The animal stayed in the area long enough for the local paper to do a story accompanied by three pictures. Although it apparently did not utilize any WPAs, it was seen on a Service easement (64X,1).

Another reported sighting of what the viewers claimed was an elk occurred north of Dassel in Meeker County. Because the average person could mistake a female moose for an elk, this may have been another moose sighting.

One other moose sighting occurred on October 3 on Ashley WPA (Sr-22) in Stearns County.

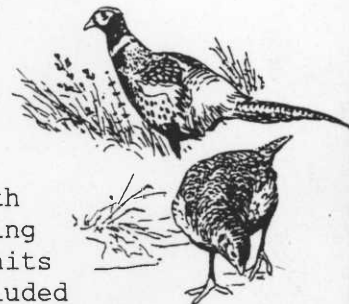
Coyotes are not seen very often in the Litchfield District but in October four of them, probably a family group, were seen in northern Stearns County near Sauk Centre.

9. Marine Mammals

Nothing to report.

10. Other Resident Wildlife

In January the MN Department of Natural Resources cooperated with us in getting approximately 1500 bushels of ear corn for wintering wildlife. Seven hundred bushels were put out on eight of the units identified as being critical areas for resident game. They included Litch/Two Island WPA (Kd-10), Yarmon WPA (Kd-14), Olson Lake WPA (Kd-19), Ella Lake WPA (Kd-47), Raymond (Kd-50), South Silver Lake WPA (ML-2), Lovell Lake WPA (Sr-3), and St. Martin WPA (Sr-7).



Due to the previous wet fall limiting fall tillage, the mild winter and general lack of snow cover, food was readily available for most wintering wildlife. This resulted in corn placed out not being utilized as could be expected in a normal winter.

Late in the year ear corn was again placed on areas suggested by the State. These included Olson Lake (Kd-19), Florida Slough (Kd-7), Quinn (Kd-23), Brenner Lake (Kd-51), Burbank (Kd-20), Irving (Kd-35), Ella Lake (Kd-47), Litchfield (Mk-1), Casey lake Mk-2), Hanson Lake (Mk-3), Greenleaf (Mk-4), Harvey (Mk-5), Peifer School (Mk-6), Rosendale (Mk-7), Tyrone Flats (Mk-8), Lake Harden (Mk-9), Miller lake (Mk-10), and South Silver Lake (ML-2). A large feeder crib was maintained by the State on Litch/Two Island WPA (Kd-10), an area normally wintering 100-200 deer.

The Stearns County Pheasants Forever Club filled small feeder cribs with ear corn on 27 WPAs in Stearns County under Special Use Permit.



Before...preparation for a hard winter so that the deer will have plenty of food.



87-18

10/87

HWT

After...the hard winter did not come
but the deer still took advantage of
the food.

The mild winter and early spring worked in favor of the ring-necked pheasant population which showed a dramatic increase of 134% over 1986. Although this seems spectacular, it should be remembered that the population level in 1986 was at an all-time low.

Hungarian partridge are found on many WPAs in the District. With the mild winter the population increased 58% over 1986.

Pocket gophers and 13-lined ground squirrels are abundant on many of the WPAs throughout the District.



Fish die off at Tyrone Flats (Mk-8) WPA.
Lack of water recharge, little wind
activity, and high temperatures reduced
dissolved oxygen in these waters, killing
many fish.

The lack of winter snow and spring rains heralded the beginning of the 1987 drought. By late summer the shallower wetlands were dry and most larger ones had less than 12 inches of water.

Combining this with high temperatures and little wind activity resulted in the remaining waters having little or no dissolved oxygen. This condition caused fish die offs in area marshes including Tyrone Flats (Mk-8) WPA.

One of the smallest WPA inhabitants, ants, are rarely given a second thought because of their insignificant size. Occasionally though, ant hills may reach sizeable proportions, as this one did, measuring nearly nine feet across.



This ant hill measured nearly nine feet across and we never did figure out what happened to this employee!

11. Fisheries Resources

Nothing to report.

12. Wildlife Propagation and Stocking

Through a cooperative agreement, the State Department of Fisheries uses some WPA lakes as rearing ponds for walleye (see Section J.1).

13. Surplus Animal Disposal

Nothing to report.

14. Scientific Collections

A volunteer from the St. Cloud State University collected several snail specimens for a class in parasitology (see Section D.5).

15. Animal Control

Nuisance beaver were removed from WPAs (see Section F.10).

16. Marking and Banding

Nothing to report.

17. Disease Prevention and Control

Nothing to report.

H. PUBLIC USE1. General

Most public use visits on the District come from waterfowl, pheasant, and deer hunters. All hunts are conducted under State regulations and seasons with no special Federal permits required. Other than waterfowl bag or enforcement checks little direct contact occurs between our staff and individual hunters using District WPAs.

Public relations in the counties around Litchfield, however, are excellent and we feel that this is a direct result of the effort that has been placed on maintaining communications with our public. Numerous phone conversations, written correspondence, and meetings occur each year with sportsmen's clubs, easement owners, WPA neighbors, and township, county, state, and national officials regarding District programs and perceived problems.

The District also prepares a quarterly newsletter that is mailed to over 1000 individuals and groups throughout the District. (Copies of the newsletter follow this section.)

During the year 27 news releases were also sent to the 31 newspapers published in our District.

The only real public relations problem during the year occurred as a result of a controlled burn on Watonwan WPA (Ct-4) in Cottonwood County. The burn damaged trees planted on the WPA by a local sportsmen's club and resulted in a story in the local newspaper and several letters to the editor. Cottonwood and Jackson Counties are located over 100 miles from the Litchfield office and we feel that the underlying cause of this controversy is the lack of Fish & Wildlife Service presence in the southern counties.

2. Outdoor Classrooms - Students

Nothing to report.

3. Outdoor Classrooms - Teachers

Nothing to report.

4. Interpretive Foot Trails

Nothing to report.

5. Interpretive Tour Routes

Nothing to report.

6. Interpretive Exhibits/Demonstrations

The office System 70 displays "The Duck Stamp Story" and "Prairie Ducks" were on display 98 days at the following locations:

Cottonwood County Court House	March 24-31
Windom Library	April 1-26
Jackson County Court House	April 27 - May 18
Lakefield Library	May 19 - June 7
Heron Lake Library	June 8 - 26

District staff set up and staffed a booth during the Willmar Sportsman's Show March 6-8. The subject of our display was the contributions local groups have made to Service programs and goals.

During March staff also presented items of program information to township officials in which fee and easement lands are located for the following counties: Cottonwood, Meeker, Jackson, and Stearns.

On September 12 the District participated in the fifth annual Prairie Pothole Days sponsored by the Willmar Chapter of the Minnesota Waterfowler's Association. Over 4000 people viewed the Service exhibits on purple loosestrife, range estimation of waterfowl, wildlife information, and wetland restoration techniques.

In 1987 18 presentations were given on a variety of topics to diverse groups such as schools, church groups, sportsmen's groups, senior citizen groups, and 4-H clubs.

7. Other Interpretive Programs

Throughout the year we make films available to local schools and organizations. This year we loaned out films for 154 showings viewed by 9944 people.

One hundred sixty-five Wildlife Week packets and the Station film list were sent to schools in the District prior to National Wildlife Week.

Over 200 "Ducks at a Distance" booklets were provided to the New London-Spicer Ducks Unlimited Chapter for their "Green Wings" banquet. This banquet is the largest such event in the country and usually attracts over 500 youngsters with almost equal numbers of boys and girls attending.

8. Hunting

All of the District's WPAs are open to hunting in accordance with state regulations.

Waterfowl

Low waters made boat access difficult on many WPAs in 1987. Hunting pressure was heavy early in the season with fair success seen. Mid and late season hunters saw few ducks with little pressure.

Pheasant

An open winter and a dry spring and summer allowed pheasant numbers to significantly increase. Publicity about this increase and the low duck numbers brought pheasant hunters out in record numbers. Success on WPAs was good early in the season but hunting pressure was extremely high.

Deer

Deer hunting on WPAs continued to be good during the bow and arrow and shotgun (slug only) seasons.

Small Game Hunting

Squirrel and rabbits are present on most of the District's WPAs and provide good hunting opportunities. Ruffed grouse in low numbers are found on a few WPAs in northern Kandiyohi, Stearns, and Todd Counties.

9. Fishing

Fishing is allowed on all WPAs, however, most units do not have water deep enough to support fish year around.

10. Trapping

The species most heavily trapped on WPAs is muskrat. Although beaver are present on the WPAs they are not usually trapped due to the low prices paid for the pelt and the amount of work involved.

Red fox are also trapped on WPAs in the District. Coyote are present in Stearns County and are trapped and hunted in accordance with state regulations on WPAs.

11. Wildlife Observations

Nothing to report.

12. Other Wildlife-Oriented Recreation

Wild gooseberry, mushroom, asparagus, and apple picking occurs on some WPAs. The latter two are normally found at former building sites. Birdwatching, cross-country skiing, and photography also take place on WPAs.

13. Camping

Overnight camping is not allowed.

14. Picnicking

Nothing to report.

15. Off-road Vehicling

Motorized vehicles are prohibited on WPAs but many unfenced areas have vehicle trespass to varying degrees.

16. Other Non-Wildlife Oriented Recreation

Nothing to report.

17. Law Enforcement

General

The two major thrusts of the District's law enforcement program are the protection of easement wetlands and the detection and resolution of violations on our WPAs.

Easement wetlands are areas that landowners have agreed not to drain, fill, level, or burn in exchange for a one-time payment. A considerable amount of time is spent each year in contacting new easement owners, answering questions from old easement owners, and checking easement basins for violations. Specific information on the easement law enforcement program is provided in Section F.13.

The District's 130 WPAs are spread out over a nine-county area and vandalism to gates and signs, vehicle trespass, drainage of co-owned wetlands, rock dumping, agricultural trespass, and the placement of tile and ditch outlets on Federal lands occurs on a regular basis. Although these individual violations may not significantly damage the resource base, they collectively erode the value of public lands for wildlife and users. We try to detect and solve these problems in a timely manner.

To improve our detection capabilities permanent staff members check boundaries and inventory wildlife, habitat, and facilities on 400 acres of fee title land (WPA) each month. Any information related to law enforcement is referred to the Assistant Manager II who acts as the lead enforcement officer.

For initial cases of a minor nature we usually attempt to work out compliance with our neighbors. Restoration actions and time tables are negotiated in the field and a follow-up certified letter is sent to document these conditions. Legal action is not usually attempted unless the individual does not complete restoration actions or attempts similar violations at a later date.

Details of the most significant violations occurred or were closed during 1987 are listed below:

<u>Case No.</u>	<u>WPA/Easement No.</u>	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Action</u>
87-4	Kd-49X	Ditching violations on two wetlands	Violations discovered 3/12/87; owner contacted/ restoration completed 4/17/87



4/14/87

87-1-27

RMB

Before shot of easement violation on Kd-49X. Pole is a wooden 2"x2" painted in one-foot increments and fitted with a metal bottom "spike". This pole is used to document height and width of drainage facilities.



4/17/87

87-3-4

RMB

Completed restoration on Easement Kd-49X.

<u>Case No.</u>	<u>WPA/Easement No.</u>	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Action</u>
87-5	Kd-28	Ditching violation on one wetland	Violations discovered 3/12/87; owner contacted/ restoration completed 4/16/87
87-6	Farming (Sr-32)	Garbage pit excavated on WPA, building foundation and other debris bulldozed onto WPA	Responsible party contacted, complete removal of all items within three weeks



4/30/87

87-3-9

RMB

Garbage and debris dumped on Farming
WPA (Sr-32).

87-8	Spring Hill (Sr-25)	Large rock dumped on parking area	Responsible party contacted, removed within one week
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5/4/87

87-3-19

RMB

Rock dumping on Spring Hill WPA (Sr-25).

<u>Case No.</u>	<u>WPA/Easement No.</u>	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Action</u>
87-9	Irving WPA (Kd-35)	Agricultural trespass and equipment storage on the WPA	Responsible party contacted; an 83-year-old farmer who initially stated that he would "just like to see the government try to get me to jail if I don't stop". After a gentle discussion about wildlife needs, the country gentleman agreed to the Service officer's requests.
87-11	Freese (Kd-4)	Marijuana cultivation	County Sheriff contacted; 20 plants destroyed
87-15	Sioux Forks (Jk-10)	One wood duck over bag limit	Paid \$125 forfeiture of collateral

<u>Case No.</u>	<u>WPA/Easement No.</u>	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Action</u>
87-16	Lake Harden (Mk-9)	Posting of a newly-purchased WPA with no trespassing signs	Contacted responsible individuals; they had leased the land from the former owner who thought he had retained the hunting rights for one more year

"Nite sites" were installed on all Station revolvers.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

Three District officers worked during the first two weekends of waterfowl season. Over 100 hunters were contacted on parking areas and in the field by "sneaky" Refuge Officers but only one violation was found.

Patrols during the rest of the season were only intermittent and essentially non-productive because birds and hunters were very difficult to find.

Posse Commatus and Tax Protestors

Several tax protest and quasi-military organizations are active in portions of our District, particularly in Stearns County. Thankfully we have had no serious confrontations even though some of our WPA neighbors and easement holders have been identified with these groups.

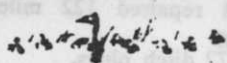
18. Cooperating Associations

Nothing to report.

19. Concessions

Nothing to report.

WATERFOWL PRODUCTION AREA



OPEN
TO PUBLIC HUNTING

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU OF WETLANDS AND WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT

WINTER



WETLANDS MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
305 North Sibley Avenue
Litchfield, Minnesota 55355



JANUARY 1987

95



Adrienne Tuch new to Litchfield area.

New staff member at Litchfield WMD

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has assigned Biological Technician Adrienne Tuch to the staff at the Litchfield WMD office. Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Adrienne will be filling the opening left by Bud Oliveira who transferred to the Culebra NWR in Puerto Rico.

Adrienne recently graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in wildlife management. As an undergraduate she participated in the Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Education program. Through this program, college students work for the Service for two summers gaining practical work experience in their field of study. She spent her first summer with the Wildlife Assistance Office in Columbus, Ohio, where she mainly gave help to landowners experiencing agricultural damage caused by wildlife. The following summer she worked at the Muscatatuck NWR in Seymour, Indiana. Her work there consisted primarily of activities that would introduce her to the varied responsibilities of running a National Wildlife Refuge.

Adrienne's duties as Biological Technician involve conducting biological surveys and studies on the WPAs. The results are then used in evaluating the success of different management practices used on the areas. She will also inventory new and existing Service property to be used in the development of separate management plans for each area. These plans provide a detailed description of the work required on each area in order to develop them into prime areas for duck production.

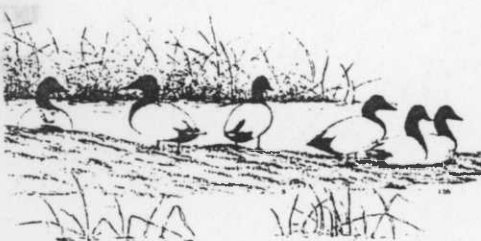
Cash bonus for CRP enrolled easements

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is offering cash incentives to landowners for enrolling potentially valuable waterfowl habitat into the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Those areas having the greatest wildlife potential will receive the highest priority for acceptance into Wildlife Management Agreements by the Service.

The Service will pay \$5 per acre during the ten years of the CRP contract for eligible acres located on or near Service waterfowl easements. In turn, landowners will grant to the Service the authority to complete mutually agreed upon wildlife habitat improvements including predator management, wetland restoration, and input on establishment of vegetative cover. The offer will be completed through a **Wildlife Management Agreement** signed by the landowner (cooperator) and the Service.

Landowners will retain trespass rights except the Service will have the right to access at reasonable times to carry out the mutually agreed upon wildlife management practices.

Landowners having Service easements or good wetland complexes on their property and are interested in this opportunity to enroll adjacent acres into CRP should contact the Litchfield Wetland Acquisition Office at 305 North Sibley, Litchfield, MN 55355 (telephone 612-693-2849) to discuss specifics of the agreement. **Unfortunately, lands enrolled into CRP during prior sign-ups are not eligible for this program.**



Three new WPA's

Three new waterfowl production areas were added to the Litchfield Wetland Management District in 1986. The areas are the Uncle Matt's Lake WPA located south of Diamond Lake in Kandiyohi County, Lake Hardin WPA located 10 miles south of Litchfield, and Miller Lake WPA in Northwestern Meeker County.



Large round Millet bales provide excellent wildlife food through the winter months.

Teamwork feeds wildlife

Deer and pheasants in central Minnesota are finding lots of extra food on state and federal wildlife areas this winter. The food is in the shape of large round bales of millet. A truly team effort made it possible.

The team consisted of the Willmar and Redwood Falls White Tail Deer Associations, the Redwood Falls Pheasant Forever Chapter, the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

The millet bales are being used to supplement resident wildlife's winter food. The bales have been placed on wildlife lands where deer and pheasant are known to congregate during the winter months. The high protein grain contained within the bales will help supply a high-energy food supplement to help wildlife better survive the often harsh winter conditions.

The millet was grown on land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program administered by ASCS and SCS. These lands would normally be seeded to grasses. However, because of high Atrazine (herbicide) carry-over, millet was seeded to protect the highly-erodible soils.

The local sportsmen's groups provided funding to cut and bale the ripened millet. The FWS and DNR picked up and distributed the bales throughout central Minnesota.

"GOT A QUESTION?"

"Wetlands and Wildlife" is prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wetlands Management Office, 305 North Sibley Avenue, Litchfield, Minnesota 55355.

Inquiries, comments or suggestions should be directed to the Wetlands Manager at the above address.

Persons wishing to be on our mailing list can do so by written request.



Nest baskets are placed in openings of cattail marshes.

Ducks Unlimited buys nest baskets for FWS

Ducks Unlimited recently provided 200 waterfowl nesting baskets for use in the Litchfield Wetlands Management District.

The bowl-shaped fiberglass structures are almost three feet in diameter and come complete with a threaded flange on the bottom for easy installation. They are designed to provide nesting waterfowl a safe, secure nest site out of the reach of hungry predators.

Recent studies have indicated that a high percentage of waterfowl nests are destroyed each year by predators such as fox, skunks,



Nest baskets provided by Ducks Unlimited will provide safe, secure nesting sites for Mallards in 1987.

United States
Department of the Interior
Fish & Wildlife Service
305 North Sibley
Litchfield, MN 55355

Franklin ground squirrels, and raccoons. Wetland managers are very concerned about this loss and are trying several different methods of increasing production. Funds for these new techniques are not always available, however, and this generous donation from Ducks Unlimited is very much appreciated.

The baskets are lined with flax straw and placed on metal poles driven into openings in cattail marshes. Only one or two baskets are installed on each wetland in an effort to keep avian predators such as crows from developing a habit of finding and eating eggs layed in the baskets.

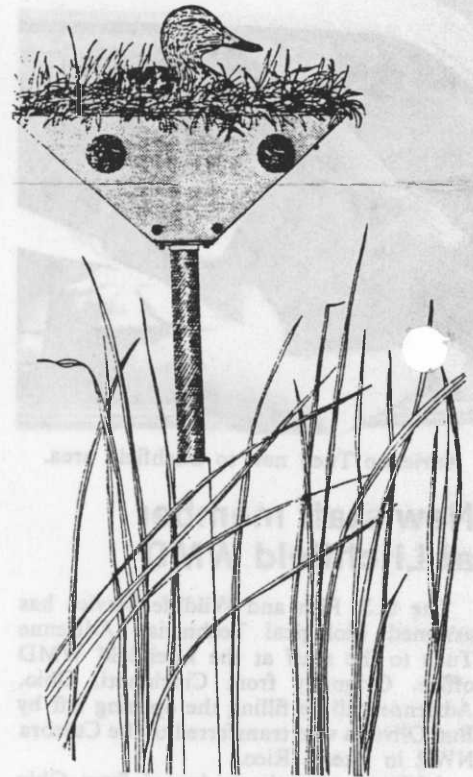
Most Waterfowl Production Areas in Meeker, Kandiyohi, Stearns, Wright and McLeod Counties that contained a suitable cattail marsh received some of the baskets. Use and success of the nest baskets will be checked next year. If waterfowl production can be improved through the placement of over water nest structures such as the Ducks Unlimited baskets, the technique will be used on more Waterfowl Production Areas and perhaps expanded onto privately owned marshes where the owners are interested in improving waterfowl numbers.



Fieldwork 1986

In 1986 the Litchfield Wetland Management District:

- checked and repaired 122 miles of boundary posting.
- constructed 72 ditch plugs.
- seeded 374 acres of native and warm season grass.
- eliminated invading trees on 306 s of nesting cover.
- installed 200 nesting baskets.
- provided predator control on 1830 acres of wildlife habitat during the nesting season.



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FIRST CLASS MAIL





SPRING

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
305 North Sibley Avenue
Litchfield, Minnesota 55355

APRIL 1987



They belong to all of us. We're talking about America's public lands, our national forests, parks and wildlife refuges.

As Americans we have always been close to our land and through our public lands we have chosen to protect and conserve resource areas of unique or significant importance.

The system of public lands, over 700 million acres in size, stretches from sea to sea and is located in virtually every one of the 50 states. We should remind our "neighbors" that the Litchfield Wetland Management District is part of this vast domain of public land in America. Public lands also include millions of acres of state parks, forests and preserves.

The **Take Pride in America** program has been started to make our citizens more aware of public lands resources and our responsibilities when using them. Since our country has grown we have become more industrialized and urbanized. We have become increasingly mobile and have more free time and the use of public lands has increased dramatically. Those who live in close proximity to public lands have a great opportunity to take advantage of what the land offers. In the case of Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) of the Litchfield District, there is wildlife observation, photography, hunting and hiking. As a part of the **Take Pride in America** theme a graphic logo has been developed.

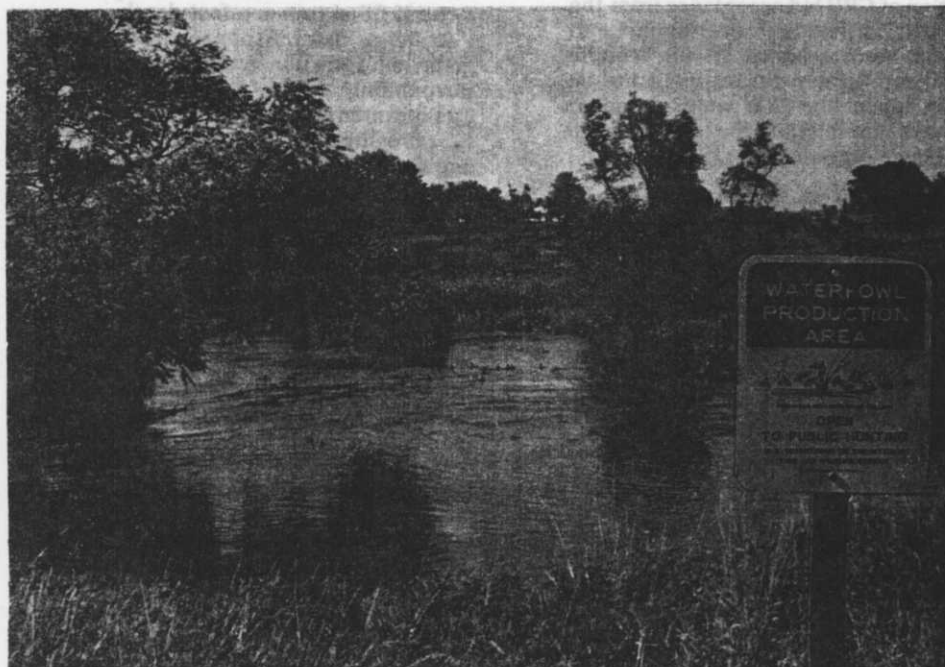
We hope it will serve as a reminder of the great value of public lands.

Neighbors of public land neighbors have an opportunity to become involved in helping preserve or improve them. While our staff works very hard at the management of these lands, there is also opportunity for citizens to participate. Our staff is ready and willing to discuss **Take Pride in America** projects with neighbors, civic and school groups, or sportsmen's clubs.

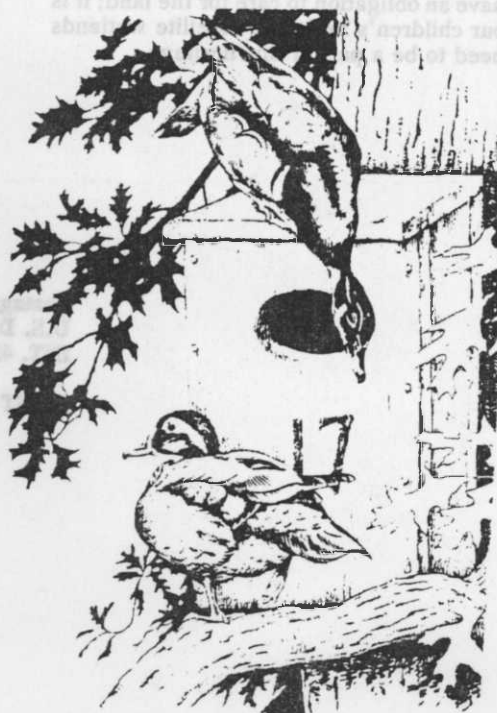
As spring comes upon us, go afield and enjoy these WPAs or other public lands. Use and respect them as if they belonged to you. They do!

Gramps says . . .

Professional gardeners always plant their potatoes and onions right next to each other. Onions cause the eyes of the potatoes to water and greatly reduces the need for irrigation.



TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA



Now is the time to check your wood duck houses. Don't forget to add fresh sawdust and check the drainage holes and predator guard.

Newsletter mailing list is expanded

Welcome Easement Owners and Minnesota Waterfowlers!

We've expanded our newsletter mailing list to include the owners of waterfowl production easements and officers of the Minnesota Waterfowl Association.

Please contact us if you have any comments or would like to see a certain topic addressed.

Wetlands and Wildlife is prepared four times each year and is distributed to Waterfowl Production Area neighbors, state and local officials, sportsmen's clubs and other interested individuals and organizations.

"GOT A QUESTION?"

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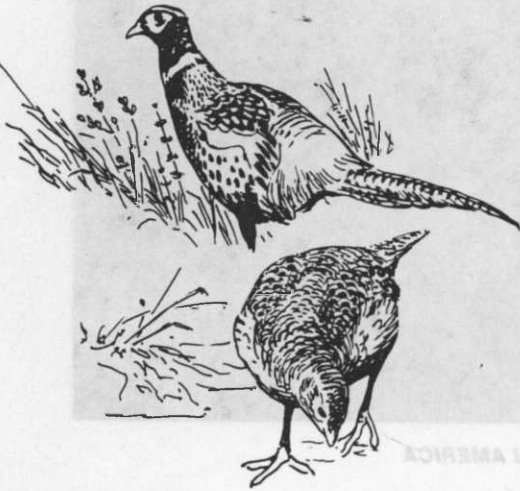
Inquiries, comments or suggestions should be directed to the Wetlands Manager at the above address.

Persons wishing to be on our mailing list can do so by written request.

Excellent response to Wildlife Management Agreements

Response to Fish and Wildlife Service/Wildlife Management Agreements on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land was excellent. One hundred six landowners made application to enroll 7,600 acres of land into Wildlife Management Agreements within the District.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is awaiting notification of CRP bid acceptance from the County ASCS offices before notifying landowners of the acceptance of the Wildlife Management Agreement. Lands had to be first enrolled in the CRP program before they would be eligible for the Wildlife Management Agreement.

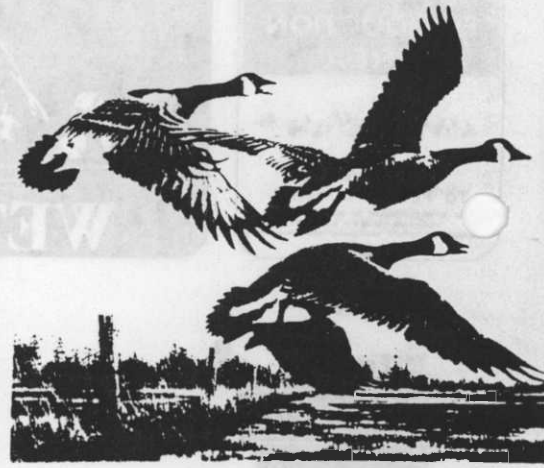


Values of satellite wetlands

Satellite wetlands are defined as the small seasonal or temporary wetlands or sloughs that often go dry after spring runoff or at least by late July. Values of these small areas are really quite great. They:

1. Provide natural flood control. One acre of wetland will hold 330,000 gallons of water if filled to a one-foot depth.
2. Act as natural sponges holding water in the field which increases moisture of the surrounding soils and recharges the groundwater and farm water wells.
3. Provides soil erosion control by holding water in its place and reducing runoff volumes and velocity.
4. Acts as sediment and pollutant traps. Standing water allows sediments to settle out and pollutants to be absorbed by plants growing in the wetland.
5. Provides wildlife habitat. These areas are some of the richest wildlife habitat in the state and provide essential breeding, rearing, and predator escape habitats for breeding waterfowl as well as winter cover for resident wildlife.
6. Provide recreational and educational benefits. For years hunters and trappers were the primary users of these wetlands but these areas are valuable to bird watchers, artists, photographers, students, teachers and many other people.
7. Provide agricultural benefits. During extreme dry conditions such as in the 30s areas like these were the only areas that produced crops.

As temporary stewards of the land we have an obligation to care for the land; it is our children's heritage. Satellite wetlands need to be a part of this heritage.



How early is it?

How early is it?

Some folks define Minnesota as the land where the elite meet the sleet.

They may have to change their definition a bit for this year, however, because wood ticks, mosquitoes and robins were reported as early as February in some areas.

The Fish and Wildlife Service staff has a contest each year to see who can make the first spring sightings of migrating bird species. The chart below compares the average dates six common birds were first seen in the Litchfield area with this year's sightings.

First Sightings

Bird - 1987	Avg. Date
Red-winged blackbird, 2-17	2-27
Canada Goose, 2-19	3-8
Mallard, 2-19	3-21
Ringneck duck, 3-4	3-29
American robin, 2-5	3-14
Marsh Hawk, 3-10	3-15

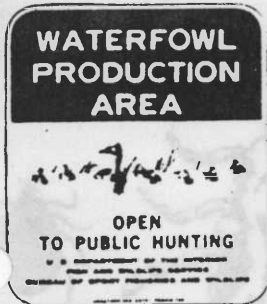
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SUMMER

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
305 North Sibley Avenue
Litchfield, Minnesota 55355

JULY 1987

Duck hunting study

United States and Canadian wildlife biologists have just released their preliminary findings on the 1979-85 study on the relationship between duck populations and duck hunting seasons and bag limits.

The main points of the biologists report were:

--Breeding populations of mallards, blue-winged teal and pintails declined rapidly from 1979 to 1985.

--Drought on the prairie parklands of southern Canada affected nesting success during some years but even during wet years duck production was significantly reduced because of declines in the amount of quality upland nest cover in prime Canadian breeding areas.

--Even years showing good duck reproduction levels (1979 and 1983) did not cause increases in the size of the following years' breeding population (the reasons for lack of increase are not fully understood but may be related to a lack of quality, wintering areas).

--Destruction of nests and the losses of hens to predators may be the dominant influence on the ability of duck populations to sustain themselves.

--Predators cause substantial mortality of hen mallards during spring and summer.

A paper summarizing management implications from the studies to date was presented jointly by the United States and Canadian wildlife agencies at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Quebec, Canada, on March 24. Copies of this paper and other information on the study results are available from the Office of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Room 536 Matomic Building, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

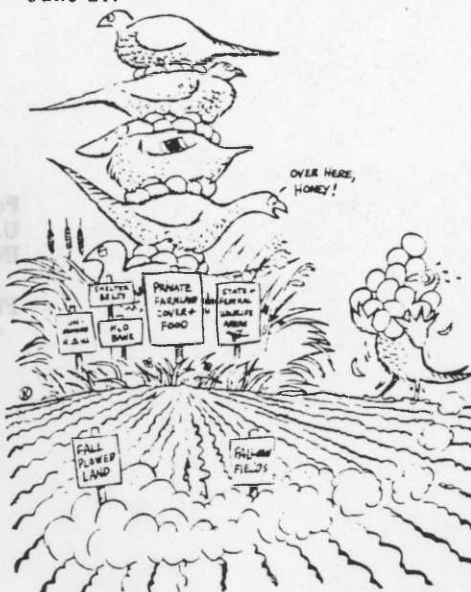


Camps says . . . Those people that have been complaining about the heat have no idea what hot weather is. I remember one Fourth of July when grandma forgot to light the wood stove and still managed to burn the fried chicken!



Nest dragging on Lindgren Lake Waterfowl Production Area in west central Kandiyohi County. The two four-wheel drive vehicles are connected by a 150-foot long metal cable apparatus. The cable causes incubating hens to flush but "floats" over the nest and does not harm the eggs.

Once the nests are found they are monitored to determine the number of successful hatchings. Predators continue to be a serious problem. Out of 130 nests found during 1987, 66 have already been predated. Only 7 have been successful. Fifty-seven nests were still being incubated when this newsletter went to press June 21.



Modern farming practices tend to concentrate nesting activity (and predators) on small acreages of undisturbed cover. New programs such as CRP, RIM and set-aside are increasing the amount of permanent wildlife habitat available on private lands.

Closed season for dog training

Now that the nesting season is well underway, dog owners are reminded that "hunting dogs may not be taken afield for the purpose of training between April 16 and July 14." This Minnesota State Statute applies to all areas in the state, including Federal Waterfowl Production Areas.

The regulation restricting the field training of hunting dogs is necessary to prevent disturbance or injury to nesting birds and their young. True sportsmen support and respect the law because Minnesota wildlife can use all the help we can give it.

If you have any questions about this or any other regulation, please contact your local State Conservation Officer.

What's an easement?

Although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been buying waterfowl production easements for over 25 years, there are still many people who are not exactly sure what the program is about. An easement:

- is only purchased from willing sellers
- permanently protects wetlands from draining, burning, leveling or filling
- is paid for by a single lump sum payment with money obtained from the sale of Federal duck stamps
- allows landowners to continue normal farming practices such as cropping, haying, grazing, plowing or working of wetlands when they are dry of natural causes
- is binding on all future landowners.

"GOT A QUESTION?"

"Wetlands and Wildlife" is prepared four times a year by the Litchfield Wetland Management Office and distributed to Waterfowl Production Area neighbors, Federal waterfowl easement owners and other interested individuals and organizations.

Questions, comments and complaints can be directed to Rob Bruesewitz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 305 N. Sibley, Litchfield, MN 55355, telephone 612-693-2849.

Minnesotans beware!

Lyme disease is on the increase.

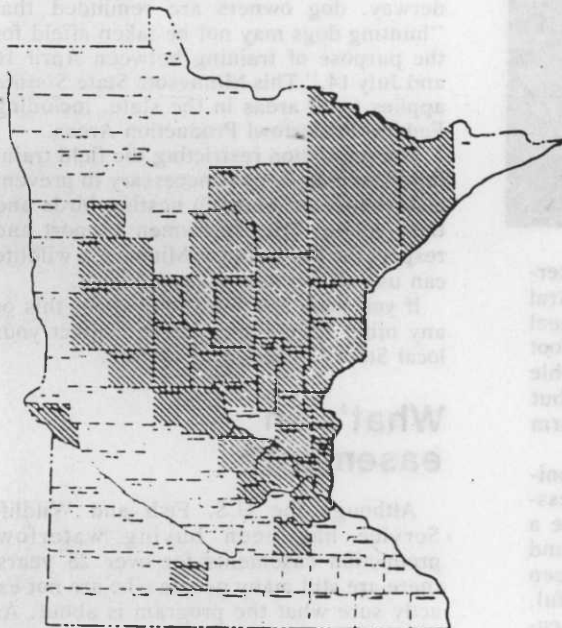
Q. What is Lyme disease?

A. Lyme disease is a newly recognized disease caused by bacteria and passed to humans by a tick bite.

Q. Do all ticks carry the bacteria that cause Lyme disease?

A. No, in our area only a very small tick called *Ixodes dammini* carries the disease. This tick has none of the white markings seen on other ticks. The common wood tick is approximately four times larger than the *Ixodes*. See illustration on cover.

Locations where people with Lyme disease were bitten by an *Ixodes* tick.



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Q. Where are *Ixodes* ticks found?

A. The kind of tick that carries Lyme disease bacteria lives in wooded, grassy areas in the midwestern and northeastern parts of the United States. *Ixodes* ticks are believed to be active throughout most of Minnesota and Wisconsin. See map.

Q. What are the symptoms of Lyme disease?

A. A variety of symptoms appear in Lyme disease but the most characteristic is a skin rash that develops at or near the tick bite. The rash starts as one or more small red areas which may be flat or raised. As the border of the rash expands up to several inches in diameter, the center tends to fade.

Other symptoms include headache, stiff neck, fever, muscle aches, and joint pain. Some individuals develop arthritis in one or more joints weeks to months after the appearance of the rash. Very few individuals develop heart and/or nerve problems.

Q. What can you do to prevent Lyme disease?

A. Avoiding tick bites will prevent the disease but may not always be possible. Ticks crawl from the grass to humans. Tucking your pants in your socks will lower the chance of the ticks crawling onto your skin. Check your skin and clothing for ticks periodically when camping, hiking or playing in wooded, grassy areas.

Q. What do I do if I get a tick bite?

A. If the tick is large with white markings on the back, it will not cause Lyme disease. To remove a tick, pull with a slow steady pressure. Avoid jerking motions. Watch for any of the above symptoms (especially the rash) and call your doctor if you believe you have the symptoms of Lyme disease.



DERMACENTOR
(common wood tick)



IXODES
(tick associated with Lyme disease)

Q. Can Lyme disease be treated?

A. In the early stages of the illness, when the rash is present, antibiotics may reduce the chance of arthritis developing.

Q. Can Lyme disease be cured?

A. In most cases the symptoms disappear after a period of time. Patients who develop arthritis as part of Lyme disease can be treated with antibiotics.

Q. How is Lyme disease diagnosed?

A. Physicians diagnose the disease based on clinical symptoms of the rash and potential exposure to the tick that carries Lyme disease. At this time a blood test is not reliable in diagnosing the disease.

For more information or to report a case of Lyme disease contact your local county health department or the Minnesota Department of Health, 612-623-5414.

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FALL

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
305 North Sibley Avenue
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OCTOBER 1987



New program restores marshes on private land

Piggybacks + Catwork = Duck Marshes?

Even teachers of that confusing new math might have trouble following the latest formula wetland managers are using to increase waterfowl habitat in Jackson, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Stearns and Wright Counties.

Under a new program started in August of 1987, piggyback leases on privately owned lands are being combined with heavy equipment and operators (catwork) provided by the Service. So far, this combination has already restored 62 wetlands covering over 150 acres.

The piggyback leases are agreements between private landowners and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the improvement of wildlife habitat. The 10-year leases were purchased from the landowners for \$5 per acre per year. Only wildlife manage-

ment practices that are mutually agreed upon will be undertaken.

The landowners retain all rights to their land including the control of hunting and trespass. To be eligible for the piggyback leases, landowners had to enroll lands which contained or which were adjacent to good waterfowl habitat in the Conservation Reserve Program during the January, 1987, sign-up period.

Due to the tremendous response to the piggyback lease and wetland restoration programs, all allocated funds have been used up. There is a good chance for similar programs in the future, however, so anyone who might possibly be interested in wildlife restoration activities should contact Rob Bruesewitz at the Litchfield office.

Rob will put your name on a contact list so you can be informed of any future programs when money becomes available.

Duck hunters: Don't shoot at Lone Mallard Hens

Lone Mallard hens called "Suzies" by many experienced duck hunters are often the most valuable and vulnerable members of the waterfowl population.

These are the hens that have been working hard through the nesting season incubating and rearing broods. They are usually the easiest birds to decoy and shoot because they've molted later and their food reserves are low.

These lone hens represent future duck hunting seasons for you and your children, so please "Help Save Our Suzies -- Take A Drake."

District harvests it's own native grass

Thirty-five acres of switchgrass of the variety Forestberg were harvested from two Service-owned fields this fall. The seed will be used to reduce the costs of seeding native grasses on Waterfowl Production Areas.

Yield of this grass seed will not be known until germination and purity tests are completed later this winter, but about 1500 pounds of pure live seed are expected. This is enough seed to plant approximately 300 acres and represents a savings of over \$15,000 to the Government.

The Service is seeding native grass species such as switchgrass, Indiangrass, big bluestem, and little bluestem whenever possible. Native grass stands composed of these perennial grasses are very long-lived and usually don't ever require reseeding.

A wide range of management techniques including burning and grazing can be used to maintain the vigor of native grass stands. Without the costs of reseeding or fertilizing these native grass fields are relatively inexpensive to maintain.

In most cases native grasses are taller than noxious weeds species and help suppress weeds by shading them out. Although some herbicide spraying is occasionally required to reduce Canada thistle, mature stands of native grasses are often relatively weed free.

DON'T SHOOT CANVASBACKS

Steel shot tips

The new steel shot shells are vastly improved over old loads.

The key to shooting steel seems to be patterning your shotgun to find a good load and sticking with it.

More ounces of shot (and dollars) don't necessarily mean better patterns either. Try the 12 gauge 1-1/8 oz. load first. Many hunters will find great results with it. With steel shot, this 1-1/8 oz. load contains about the same number of pellets as a 1-1/2 oz. load of lead. Suggested shot sizes for medium and large ducks like Woodies, Mallards and Scaup are #4, #3 or #2's.

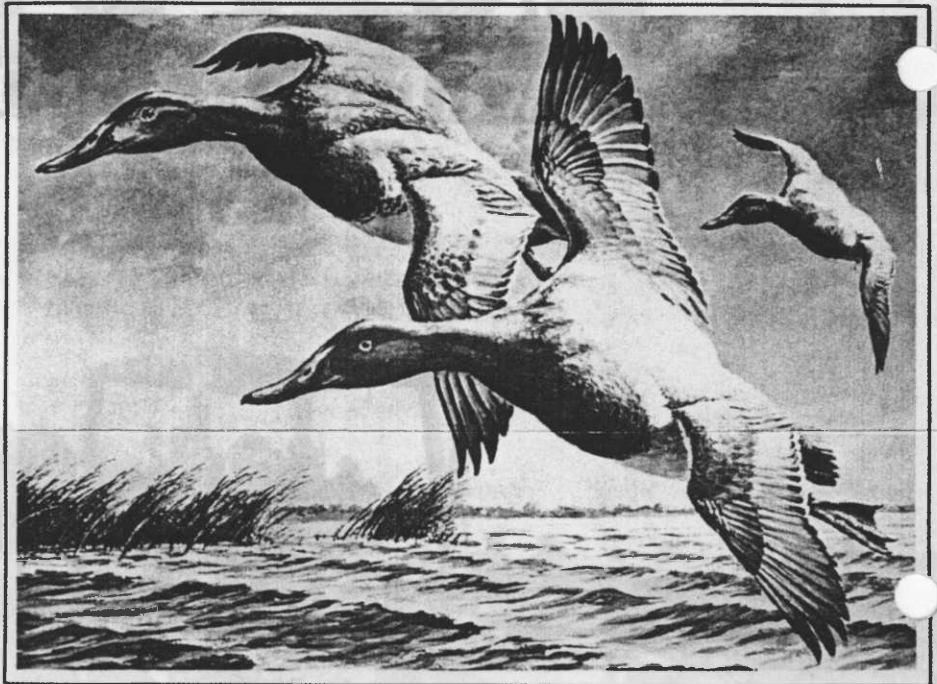
Finally, don't forget to use your open barrels or choke tubes. Improved and modified chokes seem to be the best for all reasonable hunting ranges.

Grandpa says . . .

Early one morning on my way to the duck blind I ran into a fog so thick that perch kept swimming into the windshield of my car.

It was slow going but I finally made it to Old Grady's Slough. I expected a good shoot and had just invested in four dozen brand new cork decoys. I never even saw a duck that day though. When the sun finally came up that fog bank lifted and took everyone of those new decoys with it.

The trip wasn't a total loss 'cuz I did manage to pick up a nice mess of road-killed perch on my way home!



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1982-83 Federal Duck Stamp

The canvasback population has been declining for a number of years and is too low to allow the bird to be hunted this year. Water conditions in the nesting range are improving. This improvement with the hunting closure will help the population recover more rapidly.

IDENTIFY YOUR DUCKS BEFORE YOU SHOOT!

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WINTER

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
305 North Sibley Avenue
Litchfield, Minnesota 55355

DECEMBER 1987

Wildlife benefits should be protected

FmHA Fields In Meeker County Make History

The Wildlife values of 83 acres of land owned by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in northwestern Meeker County were recently enhanced by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service contractors and will now be permanently protected by habitat saving FmHA deed restrictions.

is one of the first activities of its kind in the Nation and a first in the State of Minnesota.

Under the Food Security Act of 1985, or Farm Bill as it is more simply called, land which reverts back to the FmHA is screened by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologists and Soil Conservation Service (SCS) personnel.

This is done to comply with the existing Federal laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

The biologists look for significant wildlife and fish populations, wetlands, floodplains, or endangered species values and help the FmHA develop ways to protect these important natural resources for the future.

One way protection can be accomplished

is by deed restrictions which limit or exclude land use practices that could damage important resources. Other ways are conservation easements that assign the protection and management of important resources to another level of government or non-profit conservation organization. These groups might include the State Department of Natural Resources, counties, or conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, or Minnesota Waterfowl Association.

The details of national programs, because of their size or complexity, are sometimes difficult to grasp but a specific example in Meeker County may help to illustrate how this process works on a local level. A 270-acre tract located in northwestern Meeker County was included in the inventory lands of the FmHA. On this 270 acres wetlands and other important resources were identified by FmHA, SCS, and the Service. There was a total of 83 acres of wetlands, timber, and grassland resources considered important to migratory birds and other wildlife. Most of these acres were natural wetland basins; however, there were 14 drained wetlands totalling 16 acres on this farm.

Following an inspection of the farm, the Service recommended deed restrictions to FmHA that would prevent drainage or

filling of existing wetlands and permit restoration of the 14 drained wetlands by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

After acceptance by FmHA these recommendations will be written as land use restrictions in the final deed. The land will be resold into private ownership with deed restrictions protecting the wetlands in place. With these restrictions and an SCS Conservation Plan, these county and national resources are protected for the future. In this case the deed restrictions were assigned to the Service as the responsible agency. The Service will continue to work with the new landowner to insure protection of the identified resources.

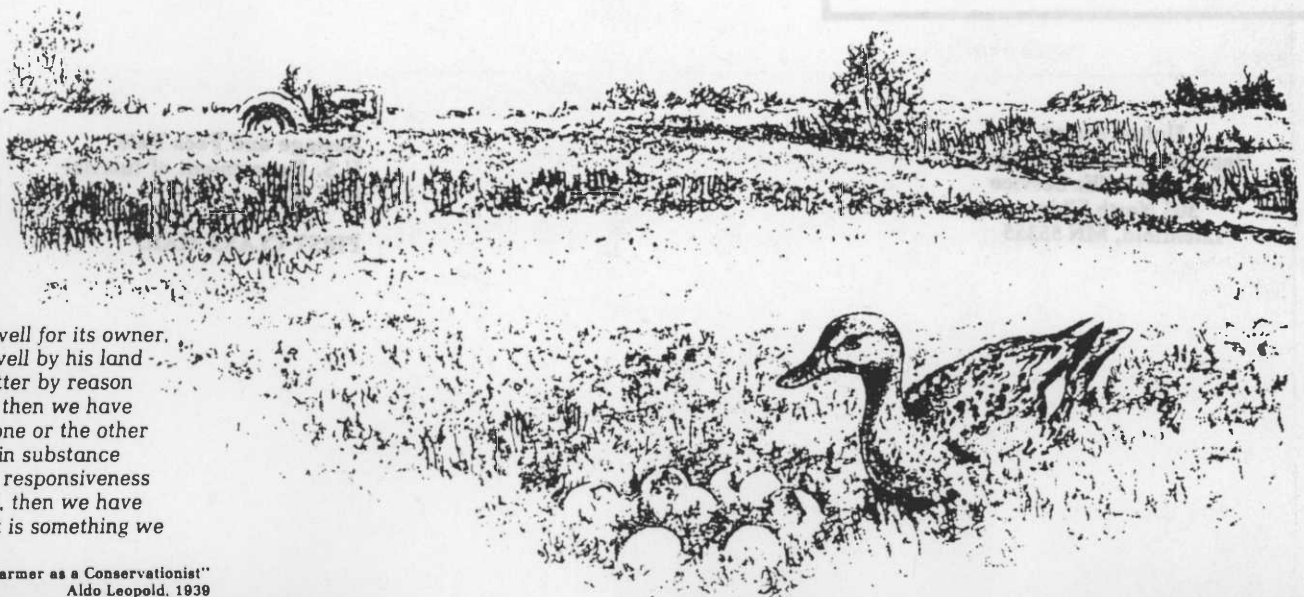
Not long ago land management by the Service was confined to public land: Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) or National Wildlife Refuges. Now, in addition to our other responsibilities, we are busy screening the FmHA lands in 13 counties of central and southern Minnesota. Our new role on private land as defined by the Farm Bill has given our agency a much broader perspective in working with wetlands and other important resources. This certainly is a very exciting time for those of us concerned with conserving the resources of this Nation and our state.

The Farmer As Conservationist

Grandpa says . . .
"I can't say it any better than this" . . .

When the land does well for its owner, and the owner does well by his land when both end up better by reason of their partnership - then we have conservation. When one or the other grows poorer, either in substance or in character, or in responsiveness to sun, wind and rain, then we have something else, and it is something we do not like.

From "The Farmer as a Conservationist"
Aldo Leopold, 1939



Management district employs stripper

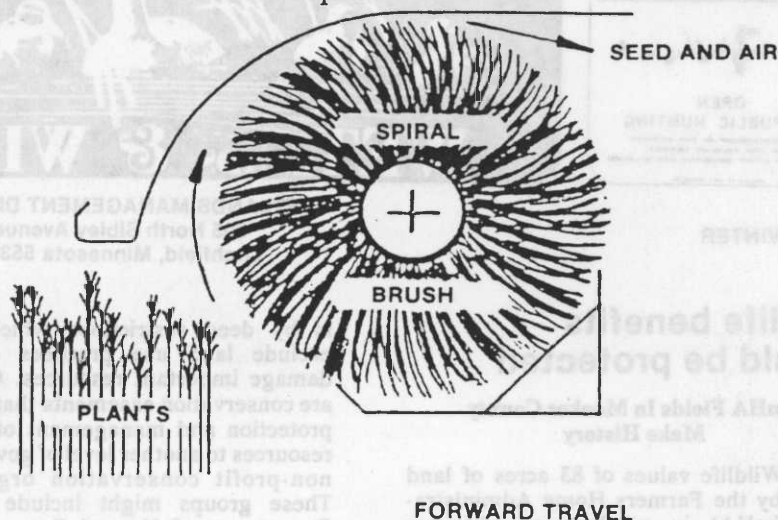
The District used a flail-vac type seed stripper to harvest native grass seed this fall. Approximately 1200 pounds of clean big bluestem and Indiangrass seed was harvested from Service-owned stands. The seed will be mixed with seed from other grasses and used to seed between 500 and 600 acres next spring.

The harvester uses a large rotating nylon brush to strip the seed from the plant without cutting the stems. Thus, once harvested, the stands retain most of their wildlife benefits. Whereas with conventional combines much of the benefits are lost due to the cutting of the stems.

The unit attaches to the arms of conventional front-end loaders making it very mobile and capable of going over wet areas without getting stuck. Since most stands of grass suitable for harvest are small in size and are often wet, these capabilities allow for the harvest where a conventional combine could not be used.

The new seed stripper will allow the District to obtain the required seed from local sources thus greatly reducing the cost of seed and providing a more environmentally-adapted seed to the area.

The FLAIL-VAC Principle



A nylon bristle brush operating at approximately 800 rpm strips the seed from the plant and creates sufficient air-flow to convey the seed to a storage hopper.

"GOT A QUESTION"?

"Wetlands and Wildlife" is prepared four times a year by the Litchfield Wetland Management Office and distributed to Waterfowl Production Area neighbors, Federal waterfowl easement owners and other interested individuals and organizations.

Questions, comments and complaints can be directed to Rob Bruesewitz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 305 N. Sibley, Litchfield, MN 55355, telephone 612-693-2849.

Fieldwork . . . 1987

In 1987 the Litchfield Wetland Management District:

- ... seeded 474 acres to native grasses
- ... eliminated invading trees on 665 acres of grass nesting cover
- ... restored 119 formerly drained wetlands
- ... constructed 2.5 miles of new fence
- ... posted 21 miles of new boundaries with Waterfowl Production Area signs
- ... repaired 5.3 miles of old fence
- ... harvested 50 acres of native grass for seed to be used in future plantings
- ... sealed eight wells on former building sites to protect groundwater quality

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I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. New Construction

Fencing

Trespass problems have been reduced substantially over the past few years due to construction of boundary fences on the troubled areas and the diminishing popularity of the snowmobile. However, the three and four-wheel all-terrain cycle has replaced the snowmobile as the big problem on WPAs.

A few new problems continue to crop up most of which are never really solved until an adequate fence or gate is installed. Trespass, whether agricultural or vehicular, destroys nesting cover or nests themselves, opens up predator lanes and can lead to irreparable damage to the land itself through erosion.

Areas are also fenced for parking lots to allow the public a place to park off the main roads and yet confine the vehicles to a small area.

1987 Fence Projects

<u>County</u>	<u>Unit</u>	Miles Barb <u>Wire Fence</u>	<u>Gates</u>	Parking <u>Lots Fenced</u>	Labor <u>Source</u>	Reason <u>Fenced</u>
Kandiyohi	Freese		1		FWS	Vehicle trespass
	Litch/Two Island	.56			FWS	Neighbor request
	Sweep	.15			FWS	Agricultural trespass
	Arctander			1	FWS	Public parking
Meeker	Hanson Lake	.725		1	YCC	Agricultural trespass
	Harvey			1	YCC	Public parking
Stearns	Farming	.05		1	YCC	Vehicle trespass
	Lake Henry	.15			YCC	Agricultural trespass
	Lovell Lake	.635			FWS	Neighbor request
	Collegeville	.2			Neighbor	Neighbor request
Wright	Robinson	.3				
Total		<u>2.77</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>		
Windom WMD						
Freeborn	Two Island		2		FWS	Vehicle trespass

Fencing supplies were furnished by the Service and the neighbor supplied the labor for the fence on Collegeville WPA (Sr-10).

A total of 107 ditch plugs/dikes and 13 tile breaks were constructed for wetland restoration (see Section F.2).

Field crossings with 18" CMP were put in on Behnen (Sr-23) and Padua (Sr-28) WPAs. An 18" CMP was provided Delafield Township, Jackson County, for inclusion in an approach to the parking lot on String Lake WPA (Jk-3) which they put in for the Service.

2. Rehabilitation

Old Building Sites

Continuing progress was made in cleaning up building sites acquired with the purchase of land.

The procedures for disposal of buildings was improved somewhat this year. In the past the sale process was initiated with a Report of Survey sent to Realty in the Regional Office. From there it went to Contracting & General Services (CGS) for bid solicitations to be drawn up. This was of low priority on their busy schedule thus often six months would go by before they took any action. In that time there was normally plenty of action in the field with vandalism and theft. Complaints from the field and a complicated sale of the Bourquin buildings finally changed the procedures to allow the Service's Acquisition Office in Litchfield to handle the sales.

The sale of the buildings on the Bourquin Tract hit a number of problems. The buildings were first sold to the Service and then later the owner and tenant put the buildings into the dairy herd buy-out program with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. In late December, 1986 the bids went out for the sale of the buildings. Shortly thereafter two handwritten messages on the back of Joe Hentges' (former tenant) sale notice went up on the barn and stated the following "this barn cannot be milked in for five years is in dairy herd buyout".

CGS anticipated bidding problems and cancelled the bids with the intention of re-bidding with the notice that the buildings are not subject to the dairy herd buy-out program since they were purchased by the Service without that stipulation. Someone contacted U. S. Senator Boschwitz and U. S. Representative Weber and both offices contacted CGS and asked that the Service hold up re-issuing the bids until they could respond to the problem.

The Service explained to the Congressmen that the buildings had been purchased at full market value and that Item 3 of the purchase option stated "the vendors further agree not to do, or suffer others to do, any act by which the value of title to said lands may be diminished or encumbered." The Service would not guarantee that the building would not be used for dairy purposes after sale of the barn. The bids were re-issued resulting in Joe Hentges bidding a high enough price, \$4100, to assure he got the barn. He could then assure it was not used for dairy purposes which would default the buy-out program and cause him to lose payment.

Because of the length of time to sell the buildings and no security, items began to walk off. The following items were stolen: control panel for the well, three steel pipe gates, cow drinking cups, gutter grates, and a water conditioner. Total value of the stolen items amounted to \$536.11.

1987 Building Disposal

<u>WPA</u>	<u>Tract</u>	<u>\$ from Sale</u>
Uncle Matts Lake (Kd-52)	Bourquin	\$18,675.33
Rosendale (Mk-7)	Pearson	2,497.11
Cosmos (Mk-11)	Swanson	<u>61.02</u>
Total		\$21,233.46

Windom WMD

Sioux Forks (Jk-10)	Beuthien	475.25
Sioux Forks (Jk-10)	Lentz	217.00
DesMoines River (Ct-2)	Whiteford	<u>79.00</u>
Total		\$771.25

A machine shed on the Pearson Tract was not included in the sale. It was to be moved to the shop complex for additional seed and equipment storage. Due to complications in the Regional Office the project had to be postponed.

The State of Minnesota requires that abandoned wells which tap into aquifers are to be sealed and closed by standards which can only be met by certified well contractors. The wells abandoned by contractors are as follows:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Tract</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Cost</u>
<u>Litchfield WMD</u>				
Uncle Matt's Lake (Kd-52)	Bourquin	6" drilled, 100' deep	Thein Well Co.	\$320
Rosendale (Mk-7)	Jacobson	4" drilled, 319' deep	Marcus Well Co.	380
Rosendale (Mk-7)	Pearson	8" drilled, 97' deep	Marcus Well Co.	400
Miller Lake (Mk-10)	Lagergren	5" drilled, 100' deep	Steffel Well Co.	300
Mud Lake (Sr-21)	Mills	2" drilled, 150' deep	Thein Well Co.	255
Baumann (Sr-35)	Baumann	36" bored, 31' deep	Steffel Well Co.	550
<u>Windom WMD</u>				
Sioux Forks (Jk-10)	Beuthien	30" bored, 60' deep	Beemen Well Co.	650
Sioux Forks (Jk-10)	Beuthien	24" bored, 32' deep, filled w/field rock	Beemen Well Co.	1860

The cost to officially abandon the well filled with rock on Sioux Forks was high due to requirements to drill through or alongside the rocks and force grout in from bottom to top.

Debris and building foundations were buried on three former building sites. They were Bourquin (Uncle Matt's Lake Kd-52), Jacobson and Pearson (Rosendale WPA Mk-7).

With the acquisition of land comes the acquisition of old tires. Disposal becomes a problem since they should not be buried or burned. A local trash hauler will take the tires at a price of \$1.50 per car tire and \$6 per large tractor tire. On the Swanson Tract (Cosmos Mk-11) 57 tires were picked up and disposed of for \$99.

Recently discovered open cisterns, serious safety hazards, were filled on Yarmon (Kd-14) (two), Evenson (Kd-1) (one), and New London (Kd-26) (one). The one on New London was discovered and filled by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Fisheries) when they were in the area improving an access to a walleye rearing pond. They also filled in an old cellar.

Islands

An .8-acre wooded island on Burbank WPA (Kd-20) was cleared of trees and brush as a predator management project to provide a safer nesting site for ducks.

Wetland Structures

Erosion had eaten away both sides of the water control structure on Watonwan River WPA (Ct-4) rendering it nonfunctional. The problem was corrected with 30 feet of additional sheetpiling, 100 cubic yards of compacted clay, and 55,000 pounds of riprap.

Water on Spring Hill WPA (Sr-25) has continually sought to go south through a dike instead of the outlet to the east. A washout occurred which practically emptied the marsh. The dike is on private land, a compromise with the State, to allow him to construct a deep ditch along the WPA rerouting an old ditch. He installed a culvert to ease pressure off the dike at the level of the old outlet. However, it was installed incorrectly and it washed out early this year. The Service, in order to protect the WPA, repaired the washout, replaced the culvert, and placed filter cloth and riprap around the inlet.

The old tile outlet to Summit Lake WPA (Kd-42) had crumbled and plugged at the inlet. Repeated cleanouts left a hole which was a hazard to the public. The inlet was fixed, riprapped, and a trash rack installed.

Interior Fence Removal

Old interior fences create safety hazards to the visiting public and interfere with management of the areas; we continue to remove them as time and means allow.

<u>WPA</u>	<u>Miles Fence Removed</u>	<u>Labor Source</u>
Arctander (Kd-21)	.62	MN Youth Program
Litch/Two Island (Kd-10)	.95	MN Youth Program
Olson Lake (Kd-19)	.75	Green Thumb
Rosendale (Mk-7)	.56	Green Thumb
Rosendale (Mk-7)	1.08	YCC
McCormick Lake (Sr-16)	.80	MN Youth Program
Messer (Sr-18)	.70	MN Youth Program
Whitney (Sr-20)	2.00	MN Youth Program
GeRoy (Td-1)	.40	MN Youth Program
Terfehr (Td-4)	<u>.05</u>	MN Youth Program
	7.91	

3. Major Maintenance

Here, as elsewhere in the Fish & Wildlife Service, boundary signing must be continually checked to replace damaged and missing signs. Signs were replaced as needed when visiting a unit in conjunction with other activities.

New tracts of land were posted on Arctander (Kd-21), Carlson lake (Kd-24), Litch/Two Island (Kd-10), Sweep (Kd-9), Uncle Matt's Lake (Kd-52), Hanson Lake (Mk-3), Miller Lake (Mk-10), Rosendale (Mk-7), Barber lake (ML-1), and Padua (Sr-28). This represented 25 miles of new posting.

4. Equipment Utilization and Replacement

A Komostu D-31P dozer was rented for some of the earthwork completed by Station personnel. A John Deere 750 dozer was loaned from DeSoto NWR for ditch plug construction activities on Conservation Reserve Program lands.

A 3-point hitch blade was transferred from Trempealeau NWR.

A Chevrolet S-10 club cab half-ton pickup was delivered in April and replaced a 1980 Dodge D-50 mini pickup.

An Ag-Renewal Model FV-12 grass stripper was purchased for native grass seed harvest.

5. Communications Systems

Nothing to report.

6. Computer Systems

In January we upgraded our database application from dBase II to dBase III for our DEC-Rainbow computer. As with any new, super-improved program, we had many bugs and other assorted problems to correct before returning to our normal smooth running system but dBase III was a significant improvement.

In November our DEC-Rainbow computer and IBM Displaywriters were displaced by a new IBM PS/2 system. After receiving two IBM PS/2 Model 50 computers, a Model 60 computer, two printers, tape backup, and software for database, spreadsheet word processing, graphics, and communications, we were up and running. All field stations in our Division now have the same equipment. Our goal is to develop our systems and applications to provide a high degree of uniformity and compatibility among stations.

7. Energy Conservation

In FY87 the Station fuel allotment was 8000 gallons. Approximately 10,800 gallons were used during the year or 135% of the allotment. The Windom WMD has not received a fuel allotment and all travel for the work in that

District is charged to Litchfield WMD. The WPAs within Windom WMD lie between 100 and 150 miles from Litchfield and a considerable amount of driving is required to administer them. Farm Bill duties required driving to counties outside of the Litchfield WMD. These factors contributed to the allotment overrun.

Frequent tune-ups, car pooling, synthetic oil, and use of fuel-efficient vehicles have long been practices used to reduce fuel use and expenses in this WMD.

The maintenance shop and office are heated with wood using electricity as backup. This backup is used only when the building is unoccupied on weekends or holidays. Electricity is on the demand system with the local electrical company. They can turn us off at their high peak times and we get a lower rate.

8. Other

The GSA office lease will expire in November 1988. We worked up a package to document our office space needs so that GSA can negotiate a new lease. A new lease will hopefully correct the multitude of problems we have with the present office and reported in 1986 Narrative Report.

J. OTHER ITEMS

1. Cooperative Programs

Records for the great blue heron colony at Lovell Lake WPA (Sr-3) were sent to the Colonial Bird Register, Ithaca, NY (see Section G.4).

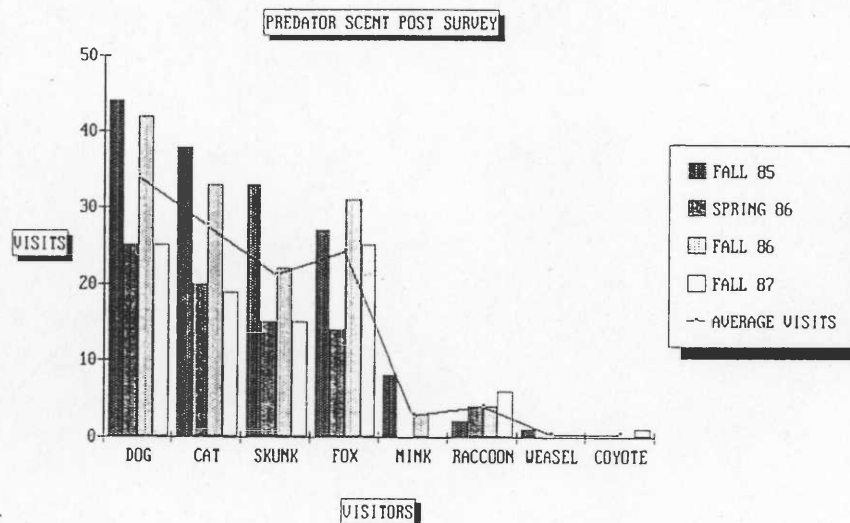
Station personnel assisted in a U. S. Forest Service gypsy moth survey. "Pheromone-baited" traps were placed on Yarmon (Kd-14), Lake Elizabeth (Kd-48), Rush Lake (Jk-5), and Loon Lake (Jk-13) WPAs near high public use areas. No gypsy moths were caught.

Again this year a predator/furbearer scent post survey was run by Station personnel. This survey is run in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources each September prior to hunting season. It will also be used to identify high predator concentrations for possible future control efforts. This year the routes were also run in early April to determine the spring predator load.

Twenty-three of the 27 routes with 10 stations spaced .3 miles apart were set up in Kandiyohi, Meeker, and Stearns Counties. Due to Farm Bill activities the other four routes were not run. A portion of each route runs along a WPA. At each station a 1-meter circular plot of sifted sand was built and a plaster of paris scent disc was set in the center. The stations were left overnight and examined for tracks the next day. The results are as follows:

Visitors	Fall 1985	Spring 1986	Fall 1986	Fall 1987*
Domestic dog	44	25	42	25
Domestic cat	38	20	33	19
Skunk	33	15	22	15
Fox	27	14	31	25
Mink	8		3	
Raccoon	2	4	4	6
Weasel	1			
Coyote				1
Total visits	153	78	135	91
Stations operable	259	253	247	220
Visit rate	59%	31%	55%	41%

*Only 23 of 27 routes run



Permits were issued to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the rearing of walleye fingerlings in Type V wetlands.

Unit	Number Fry Stocked	Number Fingerlings Harvested	Number Fingerlings/Pound	Pounds Fingerlings Harvested
Allen (Kd-17)	602,000	2363	3.5	675
Carlson Lake (Kd-24)	301,000	6851	13	527
New London (Kd-26)(east)	602,000	0		0
New London (Kd-26)(west)	154,000	0*		0
Crosier (Sr-12)	300,000	51	3	17

*removed 13,760 black crappie fingerlings at 16 per pound totaling 860 pounds



9/11/87

3d

GRM

Stearns County Pheasants Forever
put tree/shrub plantings on three
WPAs under Special Use Permits.

The Stearns County Pheasants Forever Club planted and maintained one acre wildlife tree/shrub plantings at former building sites on Oak (Sr-26), Baumann (Sr-35), and a timber opening on St. Martin (Sr-7). They also placed 22 corn feeder cribs on various WPAs in Stearns County and kept them filled during the winter months.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources cooperated with us in getting approximately 700 bushels of corn for wintering wildlife. It was put out in early January on eight of the units identified as being critical areas for resident game. An additional 800 bushels was stored in a wire crib at the shop complex for distribution for the 1987-88 winter period.

2. Other Economic Uses

The vast majority of cash receipts for this District normally come from the rental of uplands for seedbed preparation. Other activities generate some limited revenues. In 1987 the sale of buildings acquired as a result of fee acquisition was also considerable. Following is a list of economic returns for 1987:

Litchfield WMD

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Amount</u>
(See F.4)	(See F.4)	Farming	\$20,962.90
(See I.2)	Various	Building sale	21,233.46
Kd-48	Kenneth Slinden	Hay/firebreak	9.00
Total			\$42,205.36

Windom WMD

(See I.2)	Various	Building sale	\$ 771.25
-----------	---------	---------------	-----------

3. Items of Interest

Wetland Manager Kerschbaum received a Special Achievement Award for outstanding performance for FY86 in January. He received another in November for continued superior performance with an added work load. He makes good Regional Office material; that is where his next stop will be. He has been selected as Division I Supervisor and will report to the Regional Office in February 1988.

Assistant Manager Miller received a Special Achievement Award for superior performance in FY87. Glen was selected to become the next Project Leader at Chautauqua NWR and is scheduled to report in February 1988.

Soil Conservationist Schulz, Maintenance Worker Trebesch, and Tractor Operator Huhn each received a Special Achievement Award for the work they did in the Farm Bill wetland restoration activities.

Every now and then something happens that just makes your day. Participants of the Minnesota Farmers Union summer camp organized and ran a co-op store as part of the camp program. The net profits from the camp store are donated to a worthy cause determined by a vote of the members. This year the campers decided to donate their funds to the Fish & Wildlife Service. After consulting with their counselor, we used the funds to purchase duck stamps which were returned to the campers in a folder suitable for framing (see attached letter).



RECEIVED

JAN 30 1987

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
WETLAND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
LITCHFIELD, MINNESOTA

January 28, 1987

Matt Kerschbaum
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
305 N. Sibley
Litchfield, MN 55355

Dear Matt,

During our summer camp program, participants organize and run a co-op store in which promotional material, snacks and many other items are sold. Each cooperative is run in a similar fashion as a rural cooperative; naming their co-op store and electing a Board of Directors who, in turn, hires a manager to run the store.

At the end of each camp the staff determines the co-op's net profit and the manager gives a report of the store's success. The shareholders then vote on donating the money to some worthwhile cause or organization.

Some of the previous camps gave their fund to Sibley State Park to buy curtains and mirrors for the cabins and others bought kitchen equipment. The Southern Elementary Camp decided to donate their money to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I believe they came up with the idea after we did an extensive project on the environment and how important it is to us all. We used the curriculum of Project Wild.

I was very proud of our campers for this suggestion. I believe they take real pride in nature and their environment. At this time I would like to turn this money over to you, so that you may see that it is properly taken care of.

Sincerely,

Kathryn M. McLaughlin
Kathryn M. McLaughlin, Director
Family and Youth Activities

Enclosure

4. Credits

<u>Section</u>	<u>Staff Member</u>
A. Highlights	Kerschbaum
B. Climatic Conditions	Tuch
C. Land Acquisition	Kerschbaum
D. Planning	Miller, Tuch
E. Administration	Kerschbaum, Miller, Tuch, Bruesewitz
F. Habitat Management	Schulz, Miller Bruesewitz
G. Wildlife	Tuch
H. Public Use	Bruesewitz
I. Equipment & Facilities	Kerschbaum, Miller
J. Other Items	Miller, Lindquist
K. Feedback	Kerschbaum
L. Typing	Lindquist

K. FEEDBACK

1. For years we in the wetlands program have had only two ways to protect wetlands - perpetual fee or perpetual easement. These have been and will continue to be excellent programs but there are a lot of people out there who just don't fit these programs. Now, with the Farm Bill, wildlife leases, and other ideas we haven't even thought of yet, we can work with almost anyone on any project of benefit to waterfowl. Clearly the possibilities are almost without limit and the opportunities very exciting. The perpetual fee and easement programs still remain our habitat fortress and will be there even if these current opportunities dry up and blow away. But in the meantime we can work hard on these new ideas to complement the very good old programs of the perpetual fee and easement.
2. This is my last narrative report from Litchfield WMD. I was extremely fortunate to have been assigned here from the day the Station started and to have had a part in the work. Being one of the first people at a Station is an experience I recommend to all. It is exciting to look back and see all the things you have been a part of and sobering to see all the things you did not do or do well and know you were a part of those too.

In these last days at this Station I look with just a little envy at the diverse, exciting, and challenging work my successors will get to do and wish them well. This Station and the Service will benefit as new ideas and ways of doing things begin to replace or restore the old or worn out ones.

The successes at this Station were the result of a team of able and willing employees who took pride in their work and did it well. At this last writing I say thank you to them all for what they accomplished and the chance to have worked with them.

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Birds

Waterfowl Production Areas

Minnesota



Birds of Waterfowl Production Areas

Minnesota

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began the Small Wetlands Program in 1962. Since that time, some 125,000 acres of wildlife habitat have been preserved. These areas are known as Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA's). They are scattered throughout western Minnesota in a 28-county area. The average size is 200 acres for approximately 700 WPA's, but areas range in size from 30 to 2,000 acres.

WPA's represent a rich collection of wetlands, prairie, forest and other upland habitat combinations. Most areas are open throughout the year for bird watching and other nature-oriented recreation.

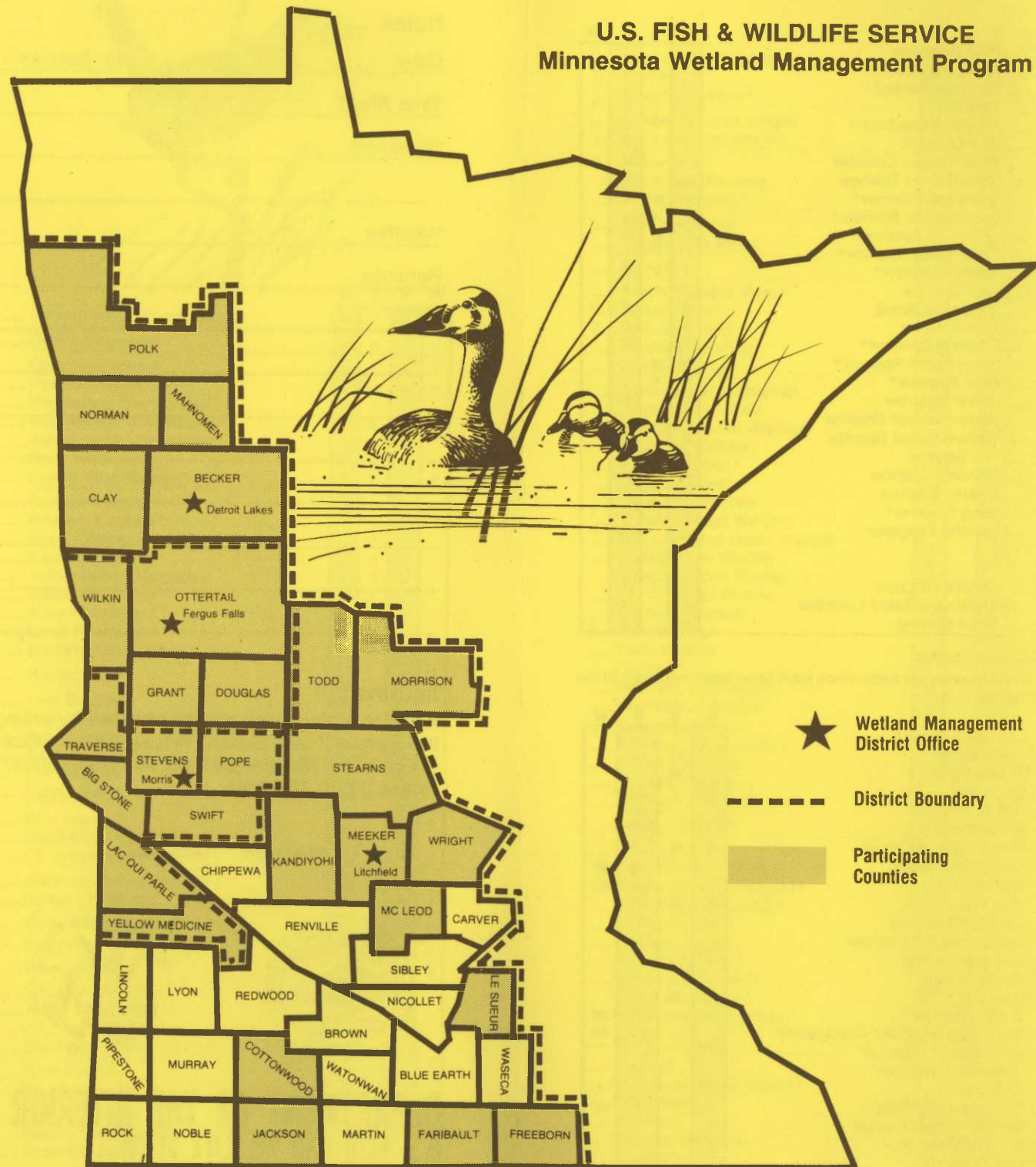
The following list of 266 bird species has been developed based on existing records for western Minnesota, and upon the knowledge of local and visiting ornithologists. This field list is arranged by order (solid lines) and family (dotted lines) according to the latest American Ornithogological Union (AOU) "Checklist of North American Birds." Good birding!

S - Spring	March-May
s - Summer	June-August
F - Fall	September-November
W - Winter	December-February

a - abundant	present in large numbers
c - common	likely to be seen
u - uncommon	not always seen
r - rare	present only in some years
ac -accidental	seen at intervals of 2-5 years

* Nests locally

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE Minnesota Wetland Management Program



	S	s	F	W
Common Loon*	c	u	c	
Red-necked Grebe*	u	u	u	
Horned Grebe	u	c	c	
Eared Grebe	u	r	r	
Western Grebe*	u	u	u	
Pied-billed Grebe*	c	c	c	r
White Pelican	u		u	
Double-crested Cormorant*	c	c	c	
Great Blue Heron*	c	c	c	r
Green Heron*	c	c	u	
Cattle Egret	r	r		
Great Egret*	c	c	u	
Black-crowned Night Heron*	c	c	c	
Least Bittern*	c	c	c	
American Bittern	c	c	c	
Whistling Swan	c		c	
Canada Goose*	c	c	a	c
White-fronted Goose	r		r	
Snow Goose	c		c	
Mallard*	a	c	a	u
Black Duck	r		u	
Gadwall*	u	u	c	
Pintail*	c	u	c	
Green-winged Teal*	u	u	c	
Blue-winged Teal*	c	a	a	
American Wigeon*	c	u	c	
Northern Shoveler*	c	c	c	
Wood Duck*	c	c	c	
Redhead*	c	c	c	
Ring-necked Duck*	c	u	c	
Canvasback*	c	c	c	
Greater Scaup	u		u	
Lesser Scaup*	a	c	a	
Common Goldeneye	c		c	
Bufflehead	c		c	
Oldsquaw	r		r	
White-winged Scoter			r	
Ruddy Duck*	c	c	c	
Hooded Merganser*	u	r	u	
Common Merganser	c		c	
Red-breasted Merganser	u		u	
Turkey Vulture	r			
Goshawk			r	u
Sharp-shinned Hawk	c	r	c	r
Cooper's Hawk	c	r	c	r
Red-tailed Hawk*	c	c	c	
Broad-winged Hawk	c	c	c	
Swainson's Hawk	u		u	
Rough-legged Hawk	u		u	r
Golden Eagle	r		r	r
Bald Eagle	u		u	r
Marsh Hawk*	c	c	c	r
Osprey	r	r	r	
Merlin	u	u	u	
American Kestrel*	c	c	c	u
Ruffed Grouse*	c	c	c	c
Greater Prairie Chicken*	u	u	u	u

	S	s	F	W
Ring-necked Pheasant*	c	c	c	c
Gray Partridge*	c	c	c	c
Sandhill Crane	u		c	
Virginia Rail*	c	c	c	
Sora*	c	c	c	
Yellow Rail*	r	r	r	
American Coot*	a	c	a	r
Semipalmated Plover	u		u	
Piping Plover	u		u	
Killdeer*	a	a	a	
American Golden Plover	c		r	
Black-bellied Plover	c		c	
Ruddy Turnstone	u		u	
American Woodcock*	c	c	c	
Common Snipe*	c	c	c	
Upland Sandpiper*	u	u	u	
Spotted Sandpiper*	c	c	c	
Solitary Sandpiper	c	c	c	
Willet	u			
Greater Yellowlegs*	c	c	c	
Lesser Yellowlegs*	a	r	a	
Pectoral Sandpiper	c		c	
White-rumped Sandpiper	u		u	
Baird's Sandpiper	c		u	
Least Sandpiper	c		c	
Dunlin	u		u	
Short-billed Dowitcher	u		u	
Long-billed Dowitcher	u		u	
Stilt Sandpiper	u		u	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	c		a	
Western Sandpiper	u		u	
Marbled Godwit*	c	c	u	
Hudsonian Godwit	u		r	
Sanderling	u		u	
Wilson's Phalarope*	c		u	
Herring Gull	u	u	u	
Ring-billed Gull	a	a	a	r
Franklin's Gull	a	a	a	
Bonaparte's Gull	c		c	
Forster's Tern*	c	c	c	
Common Tern*	c	c	c	
Caspian Tern	u	u	u	
Black Tern*	a	a	a	
Rock Dove*	a	a	a	a
Mourning Dove*	a	a	a	r
Yellow-billed Cuckoo*	u	u	u	
Black-billed Cuckoo*	u	u	u	
Screech Owl*	u	u	u	u
Great Horned Owl*	c	c	c	c
Snowy Owl	u		u	u
Barred Owl*	u	u	u	u
Long-eared Owl*	c	c	c	u
Short-eared Owl*	u	u	u	u
Saw-whet Owl*	r	r	r	r
Whip-poor-will	r	r	r	
Common Nighthawk*	c	c	c	
Chimney Swift*	c	c	c	



	S	s	F	W
— Ruby-throated Hummingbird *	c	c	u	
— Belted Kingfisher *	c	c	c	u
— Common Flicker *	c	c	c	r
— Pileated Woodpecker *	u	u	u	u
— Red-bellied Woodpecker	r	r	r	r
— Red-headed Woodpecker *	u	u	u	
— Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *	c	c	c	
— Hairy Woodpecker *	c	c	c	c
— Downy Woodpecker *	c	c	c	c
— Eastern Kingbird *	c	c	c	
— Western Kingbird *	c	c	c	
— Great Crested Flycatcher *	c	c	c	
— Eastern Phoebe *	c	c	c	
— Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	u	r	u	
— Willow Flycatcher	r	r	r	
— Alder Flycatcher *	c	c	c	
— Least Flycatcher *	c	c	c	
— Eastern Wood Pewee *	c	c	c	
— Horned Lark *	a	c	a	c
— Tree Swallow *	c	c	c	
— Bank Swallow *	c	c	c	
— Rough-winged Swallow *	c	c	c	
— Barn Swallow *	c	c	c	
— Cliff Swallow *	u	u	u	
— Purple Martin *	c	c	c	
— Blue Jay *	c	c	c	c
— Black-billed Magpie	r		u	u
— Common Crow *	c	c	c	u
— Black-capped Chickadee *	c	c	c	c
— Boreal Chickadee			r	r
— White-breasted Nuthatch *	c	c	c	c
— Red-breasted Nuthatch			u	u
— Brown Creeper	u		u	u
— House Wren *	c	c	c	
— Winter Wren	u		u	
— Long-billed Marsh Wren *	c	c	c	
— Short-billed Marsh Wren *	u	u	u	
— Gray Catbird *	c	c	c	
— Brown Thrasher *	c	c	c	
— American Robin *	a	a	a	r
— Hermit Thrush	c		c	
— Swainson's Thrush	c		c	

	S	s	F	W
— Gray-cheeked Thrush	u		u	
— Veery	u		u	
— Eastern Bluebird *	c	c	c	
— Golden-crowned Kinglet	c		c	r
— Ruby-crowned Kinglet	c		c	
— Water Pipit	c		c	
— Bohemian Waxwing			u	u
— Cedar Waxwing *	c	c	c	c
— Northern Shrike	r		u	u
— Loggerhead Shrike	u	u	u	
— Starling *	a	a	a	a
— Yellow-throated Vireo *	c	c	u	
— Solitary Vireo	c	c	u	
— Red-eyed Vireo *	c	c	u	
— Philadelphia Vireo	u		u	
— Warbling Vireo *	c	c	c	
— Black-and-white Warbler	c		c	
— Tennessee Warbler	c		c	
— Orange-crowned Warbler	u		u	
— Nashville Warbler	c		c	
— Yellow Warbler *	c	c	c	
— Magnolia Warbler	c		c	
— Cape May Warbler	r			
— Yellow-rumped Warbler	a	c	c	
— Black-throated Green Warbler	r			
— Blackburnian Warbler	u		u	
— Chestnut-sided Warbler	c		c	
— Bay-breasted Warbler	u		u	
— Blackpoll Warbler	c		c	
— Pine Warbler	u		u	
— Palm Warbler	c		c	
— Ovenbird	c		c	
— Northern Waterthrush	u		u	
— Connecticut Warbler	r		r	
— Mourning Warbler	c		u	
— Common Yellowthroat *	c	c	c	
— Wilson's Warbler	c		c	
— Canada Warbler	c		c	
— American Redstart *	c	c	c	
— House Sparrow *	a	a	a	a
— Bobolink *	c	c	u	
— Western Meadowlark *	a	a	a	r
— Yellow-headed Blackbird *	c	c	c	
— Red-winged Blackbird *	a	c	a	
— Orchard Oriole	r	r		
— Northern Oriole *	c	c	c	
— Rusty Blackbird	c	u	c	r
— Brewer's Blackbird *	u	c	u	
— Common Grackle *	a	a	a	r
— Brown-headed Cowbird *	c	c	c	
— Scarlet Tanager *	u	r	r	
— Cardinal	r	r	r	r
— Rose-breasted Grosbeak *	c	c	c	
— Indigo Bunting *	c	c	c	
— Dickcissel		u		
— Evening Grosbeak			u	u
— Purple Finch	u	r	u	u

— Pine Grosbeak				
— Hoary Redpoll				
— Common Redpoll	c			
— Pine Siskin	u	r		
— American Goldfinch *	c	c		
— Red Crossbill				
— White-winged Crossbill				
— Rufous-sided Towhee	u	r		
— Savannah Sparrow *	c	c		
— Grasshopper Sparrow *	u	u		
— LeConte's Sparrow *	u	u		
— Sharp-tailed Sparrow *	r	r		
— Vesper Sparrow *	c	c		
— Lark Sparrow	r	r		
— Dark-eyed Junco	a			u
— Tree Sparrow	c			
— Chipping Sparrow *	c	c		
— Clay-colored Sparrow *	c	c		
— Field Sparrow *	r	r		
— Harris' Sparrow	c			
— White-crowned Sparrow	u			
— White-throated Sparrow	c			
— Fox Sparrow	c			
— Lincoln's Sparrow	u			
— Swamp Sparrow *	c	c		
— Song Sparrow *	c	c		r
— Lapland Longspur	c			r

— Smith's Longspur	r	r		
— Chestnut-collared Longspur	r			
— Snow Bunting	u			c

Casual Species

The following are birds which have been seen irregularly in the WPA's:

Little Blue Heron *				
Cattle Egret		ac		
Snowy Egret		ac		
Cinnamon Teal	ac		ac	
Surf Scoter			ac	
Black Scoter			ac	
Red-shouldered Hawk	ac	ac		
Ferruginous Hawk	r	r		ac
Gyr Falcon				ac
King Rail	ac	ac	ac	
Common Gallinule	r	r		
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	r		r	
American Avocet	r		r	
Glaucous Gull	r		r	
Barn Owl *		ac		
Great Gray Owl				ac
Black-backed 3-toed Woodpecker			ac	ac
Olive-sided Flycatcher	r			
Vermilion Flycatcher			ac	
Gray Jay				r
Townsend's Solitaire				ac
Golden-winged Warbler	r			
Eastern Meadowlark	r			
Lark Bunting	r			

S	s	F	W
	r		
	ac		
	ac		
ac		ac	
		ac	
		ac	
ac	ac		
r	r		ac
			ac
r			
	ac		
			ac
		ac	ac
r			
		ac	
			r
r			ac
r			
r			

Notes

Date _____ No. Species _____

Time Afield _____

Observers _____

Weather _____

Remarks _____

Information

Additional information may be obtained by writing the Fergus Falls Wetland Management Office, Route 1, Box 26A, Fergus Falls, Minnesota 56537. Phone: (218) 739-2291

RF-32580-2 September 1979



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 668-132

Wetlands Can Yield Dollars



The following information in the form of Questions and Answers explains The Wetlands Easement Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service



Marshes such as this are needed for duck production. Ducks use these marshes in spring, summer, and fall. Other wildlife use these areas year-round.

Why protect wetlands?

Wetlands are mandatory for waterfowl production. And they are rapidly disappearing, yielding to the encroachment of expanding society. Wetlands not only provide essential habitat for wildlife, they serve man too. By protecting wetlands, man protects his future and the destiny of waterfowl in North America.

Do wetlands contribute any other benefits?

Yes. They aid in flood and erosion control by holding the water on the land, reducing fast runoff and flooding conditions. Water held in wetlands also has a chance to seep underground and recharge water supplies.

What rights are included in the Easement?

You agree not to drain, burn, level, or fill the wetlands covered by the Easement. The agreement also gives Service representatives the right of entry on your land to check compliance with the terms of the easement contract. Crops and livestock will not be disturbed, however, as inspections are usually made from airplanes.

What type of document is used to transfer these rights?

The agreement used by the Service is both an option and an easement. The option provides that the Service may at any time during the option period accept the easement whereupon it will be recorded in the county records. You must adhere to the terms of the agreement from the day you sign it.

Will the Service purchase a wetlands Easement on any property?

No. The property must have wetlands of value to waterfowl and be in a county which has been approved for the easement program.

How much of my land would be covered by the Easement?

The Easement covers certain existing wetlands or those which recur through natural or man-made causes. These wetlands will be shown on a map which is part of the Easement. Enforcement of the terms of the easement contract will be limited to these wetlands.

What happens to land I have already drained?

It will not be covered by the provisions of the Easement.

Will the Easement affect my farming use of the wetlands?

The Easement does not affect normal farming practices such as cropping, haying, grazing, plowing or working wetlands when they are dry of natural causes.

Will the Easement affect hunting and trapping rights on my land?

No. You still have the right to open or close your lands to hunting and trapping as you have in the past.

Will the Easement affect my mineral rights?

No. You retain your right to develop your minerals. The rights the United States acquire are limited to burning, draining, filling and leveling of wetland areas.

How many years will the Easement be in effect?

This is a permanent (perpetual) Easement.

Why is the option period necessary?

The option period is needed so that the Government will have time to obtain and examine evidence of legal title to the land.

How soon will the Service accept the Easement?

Normally the Easement agreement will be accepted in less than four months. The option is usually taken for a longer period of time to allow for unforeseen problems.

What happens before the Easement is accepted?

We obtain title evidence from the abstractor at no cost to you. This is checked to determine that all owners of record have signed the Easement. Our attorneys then review the case and furnish an opinion of title. If the opinion points out any title defects, we will take steps to have them corrected. The Easement will then be accepted by us.

What happens after the Easement is accepted?

You will receive a letter by certified mail informing you that the Easement has been accepted and is being recorded at the county courthouse. We will also send you a copy of the fully executed Easement at that time.

What is the method of payment?

A single lump-sum payment will be made by a U.S. Treasury check for the amount specified in the Easement.

When will I be paid?

Payment is usually made within three to five months after the Easement has been signed. We must record the Easement agreement and have the abstractor bring the title evidence up to date.

What if I have a mortgage on the property?

In most cases this will not affect the Easement transaction. If it is necessary to have the mortgagee give his consent to the Easement, we will ask him to sign a statement known as a subordination agreement.

Will I have to pay for the subordination agreement?

When a charge is made by the mortgagee for the subordination agreement, you must pay this charge, but you may file a claim and be reimbursed by the United States.

I am buying my land under a contract for deed, does the seller join in signing the Easement?

Yes. In order for an Easement to be placed on your property, both you and the contract seller, who holds the legal title, must sign the Easement agreement.

Who receives payment when there is a mortgage or contract for deed?

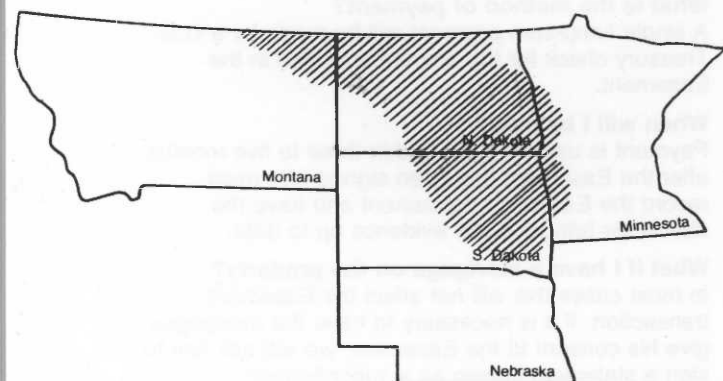
This is dependent on the mortgage holder or the contract seller and the terms of your agreement with them. They may require that all or a part of the money be applied to the mortgage or contract balance, or they may allow the entire payment to go to you.



A grouping of temporary and permanent wetlands in the same area are best for duck production.



Even small potholes qualify for the easement program. Breeding ducks often use them in the springtime.



More than half of the ducks raised each year in the contiguous United States come from the shaded area of this map. Most of the easement activity also occurs in this region.

The program to save The Wetlands was authorized by Congress on August 1, 1958. It is financed by receipts from the sale of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, commonly known as Duck Stamps. Sportsmen throughout the nation are sponsoring this project when they purchase these stamps.

RF30130-9

December 1976

U.S. Government Printing Office; 1977-766-274

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under United States administration.

The Easement Program Provides for

One lump-sum payment

Your agreement not to drain, burn, level, or fill wetlands

A permanent or perpetual agreement

Land remaining on tax rolls

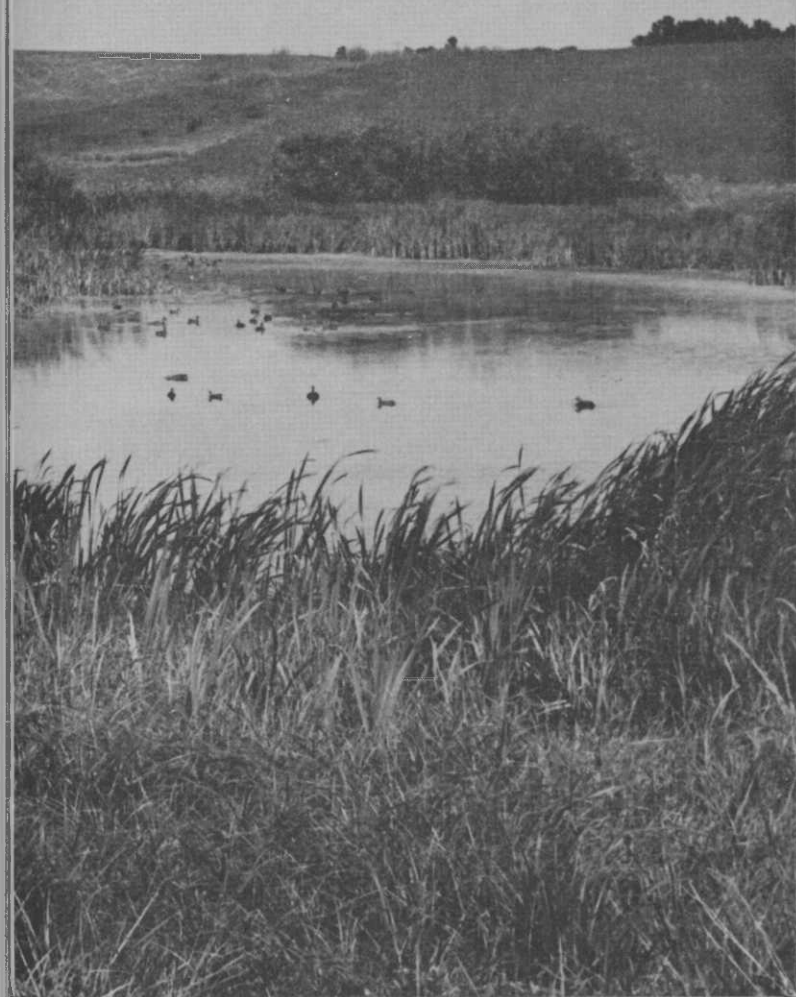
For further information contact:

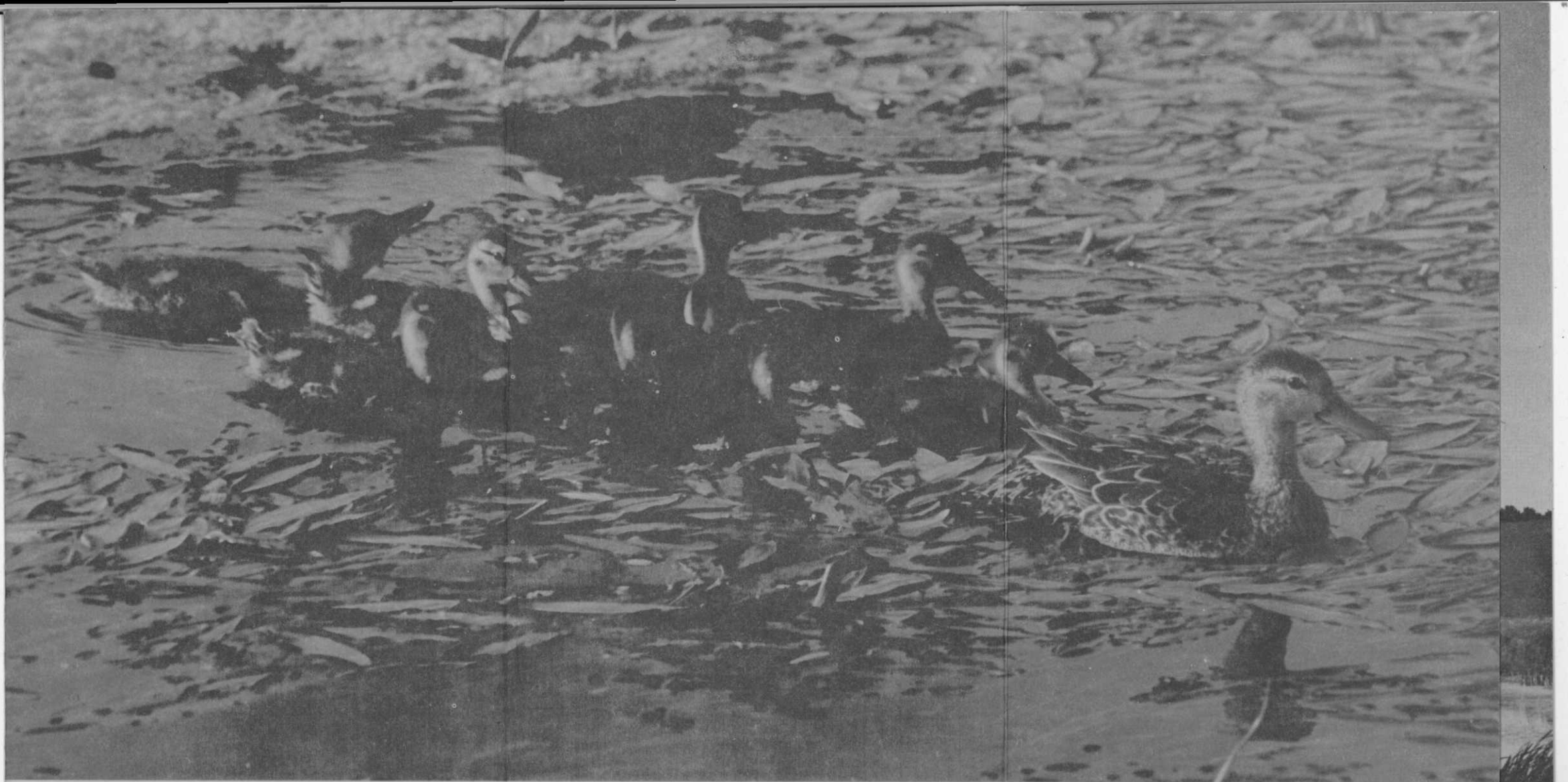


DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Waterfowl Production Areas Minnesota



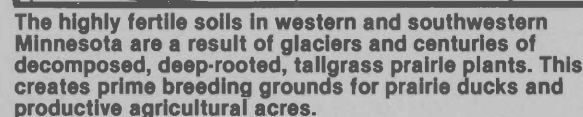


WPA wetlands can vary in size from less than a tenth of an acre to one hundred or more acres of water area. Ranging from temporary sheet water which lasts only a few days in early spring to permanent lakes, marshes and potholes, a variety of wetlands meets the varying breeding, nesting and migration needs of many waterfowl species. One marsh usually cannot supply all the requirements of a nesting pair of ducks for the complete production cycle — from courtship to nesting, egg incubation, and raising ducklings to flight stage. Waterfowl biologists have learned that a complex or collection of wetlands, of varying sizes and depths as found in the Prairie Pothole Region, is needed to provide the food, cover and solitude needed by breeding ducks.

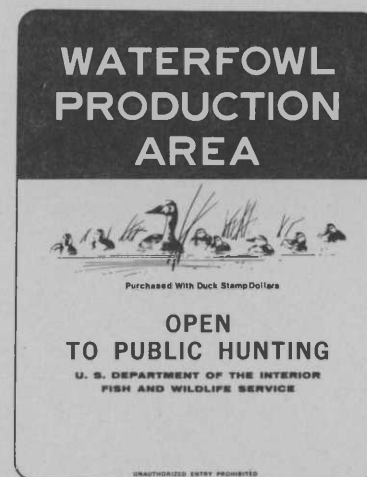
WPAs DO MORE THAN RAISE DUCKS

Scientists are just starting to learn about the importance of regional wetland systems — that collection of marshes waterfowl need to breed successfully. Recent studies have examined the benefits to man from flood control, groundwater recharge, pollution and sediment filtration, shoreline erosion protection, soil evaporation rate reduction. All these can affect an area's crops, industry, drinking water, and general quality of life. Although research results are not in yet, these studies suggest there may be significant rewards in preserving wetlands — benefits that go far beyond wildlife preservation.

Wetlands are one of the most productive kinds of wildlife habitat. Besides prairie ducks, they are home to many other kinds of birds such as rails, terns, kingfishers, herons, sandpipers and egrets. The excellent cover in the surrounding upland grass is important for deer, upland game birds, hawks, and many smaller birds such as larks, wrens, and bobolinks. Furbearers including weasels, mink, fox and muskrat are common in WPA habitat. When connected to lakes or streams with fish populations, wetlands may also be important fish spawning areas, especially for northern pike.



WHAT ARE WPAs?



This sign marks the boundary of a Waterfowl Production Area.

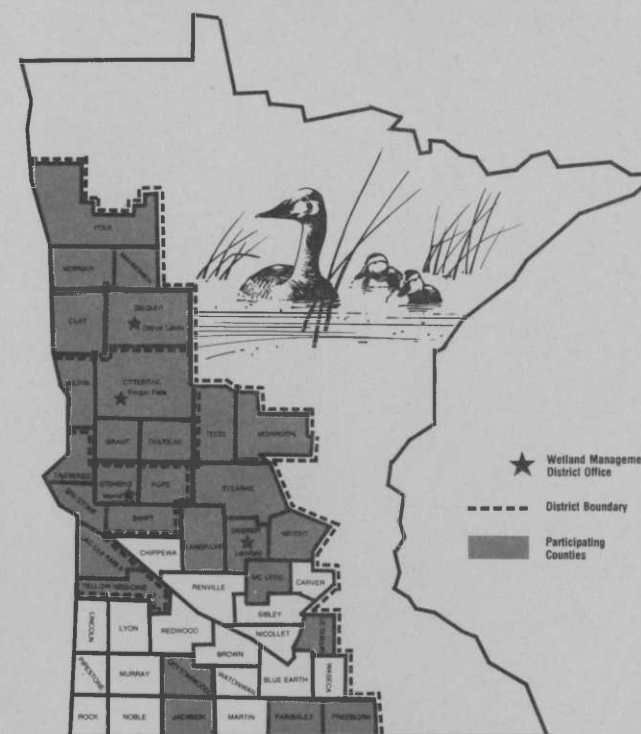
Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) are primarily prairie wetlands with associated uplands managed to provide nesting areas for waterfowl. Drainage and cultivation of many small wetlands prompted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to begin a program to acquire small wetlands in 1962. This program preserves high quality nesting areas for declining waterfowl populations. These valuable prairie wetlands are bought from willing landowners who, in many cases, want their marshes preserved and managed for this purpose. Acquisition money comes from the sale of "Duck Stamps" to waterfowl hunters. Today, some 125,000 acres of wildlife habitat has been preserved in western Minnesota under this Federal program. There are 700 WPAs located in 22 countries.

WPA management involves a variety of activities, depending on the property's soils, topography and past history. Management is aimed at

encouraging the most favorable wetland and upland food and cover for waterfowl production.

Drained wetlands are restored by plugging ditches or building small water control structures. On the uplands, native grasses, legumes and introduced grasses are seeded to provide dense nesting cover for ducks and other wildlife. Native grasses may be managed by controlling burning, haying or grazing. Sometimes uplands are leased to farmers for cultivation with the agreement that they will leave part of the crop standing for winter feed and cover for resident game.

WPAs ARE AN IMPORTANT NATIONAL RESOURCE



Countless thousands of pothole ponds and marshes were left by the glaciers over a broad band of northern grasslands. This is called the Prairie Pothole Region and it covers 300,000 square miles. 50% of the ducks in North America are raised each year in this region, even though it contains only 10% of the continent's wetlands. It is here that fertile wetland waters and soils which provide abundant, high protein food for your growing ducklings.

WPAs ARE FOR PEOPLE



Whether you are a hunter, trapper, birdwatcher, photographer, or family looking for open space to hike, WPAs are great places to observe and enjoy wildlife and the outdoors.

WPAs are open in the fall to public hunting, except where occasionally posted otherwise. Waterfowl, upland game birds and big game may be hunted and furbearers trapped in accordance with Federal and State laws.

Nature study and appreciation on WPAs are popular activities for individuals, families and school groups. Bird watching, marsh investigation, identification of remnant native prairie grass, or wildlife population studies offer exciting entry to the complex world of prairie wetlands. Some WPAs have interpretive trails and leaflets to help visitors learn more about wetland wildlife and ecology.

General recreation activities such as hiking and cross-country skiing are also welcome on WPAs. Each season of the year offers a different experience of wildlife and vegetation life-cycles — in the solitude of open prairie spaces.



SOME IMPORTANT RULES TO FOLLOW

All motor vehicles including snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles, are prohibited unless specific areas are posted as open to this use. Please use designated parking areas.

Be careful not to crush or beat down the vegetation. Tire tracks destroy duck nesting cover and may help lead predators to nesting waterfowl.

Respect the neighbors' private property. Make sure you are on the correct side of the boundary line.

Hunting and trapping are subject to all applicable Federal and State laws. Firearms are permitted only during open hunting seasons or as authorized by State regulations.

Camping and overnight use is prohibited.

Fires are prohibited.

DO YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Each of the four District Offices, shown on the map, is assigned to manage WPAs in several counties. They have special leaflets which you will find useful such as bird lists, hunting regulations, and maps.

The District staff may also have specialists in the areas of wildlife, soils or botany who would be pleased to help answer questions or suggest WPAs for specific study pursuits or interests.

Interpretive displays and leaflets at some of the offices may help your understanding of prairie wetlands, waterfowl, and wildlife management.

★ **Detroit Lakes**
R.R.#3, Box 47 D
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501
(218)847-4431

★ **Morris**
Route 1, Box 208, Mill Dam Road
Morris, MN 56267
(612)589-1001

★ **Fergus Falls**
Route 1, Box 76
East Highway 210
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218) 739-2291

★ **Litchfield**
305 N. Sibley
Litchfield, MN 55355
(612) 693-2849

We would like to meet you. Unlike other public lands with easily defined boundaries and entrance roads, our WPAs are spread over many counties, and are usually in remote areas. Because of this, we often do not know who our WPA visitors are; where they have come from; what activities they do on WPAs; and if their visit was rewarding. If you do not have time to stop at one of our Wetland Offices, write a note and let us know about your visit. Tell us what you saw and suggest how we can make your next WPA visit more enjoyable.

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